

Information about Environmental Management Agricultural Operation Planning (AOP) Certificate (For Producers of Agricultural Source Materials Preparing Their Own Strategy and Plan)

Infosheet

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INTRODUCTION

The information contained in this document is derived from the Nutrient Management Act, 2002 (NMA) and Ontario Regulation 267/03 (O. Reg. 267/03). Every effort has been made to make it as accurate as possible, but is not authoritative. Please refer to the e-Laws website or the official volumes printed by Publications Ontario for the authoritative text of the act.

This infosheet provides information on new and renewal certificate requirements.

Overview of Agricultural Operation Planning Certificate

An Agricultural Operation Planning (AOP) Certificate is required if you are preparing a Nutrient Management Strategy (NMS) and/or Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) for an agricultural operation that you own, operate or are an employee of. Your certificate number is required on the NMS/Ps you prepare. Forms used to register a farm operation under the Nutrient Management Act must also include your certificate number.

The skills and knowledge that are required for the AOP certificate can be found in The Agricultural Operation Planning Certificate Core Competencies guide, available online.

Certificates are valid for five years.

Certification Requirements

Take the Courses

There are two required courses for the AOP Certificate, which are offered in both English and French:

- Introduction to Nutrient Management (previously Fundamentals of Nutrient Management) or equivalent*
- Regulation and Protocols

You must have taken an up-to-date course to have it applied to your certification requirements. Call the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus at 1-855-648-1444 to make sure past courses you have taken qualify.

Course Schedule

To find out the course schedule, visit the Nutrient Management Training Course Schedule.

To register for any of the courses in this suite or the equivalency, call the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus at 1-855-648-1444.

Introduction to Nutrient Management

This two-day course outlines the basic agronomic principles underlying the Nutrient Management Act, 2002 and O. Reg. 267/03. It is highly recommended that you attend this course before taking the Regulation and Protocols Course.

*Until June 30, 2012, we will accept the following as an equivalency:

- Participation at a Third Edition Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) course and completion of a peer reviewed Environmental Farm Plan. The producer must submit a letter from their local Peer Review Committee verifying their Third Edition EFP has been deemed appropriate; and,
- Pass a quiz. Quizzes can be written at OMAFRA Resource Centres. To arrange a quiz, contact the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus at 1-855-648-1444.

Regulation and Protocols

This two-day course is designed for farmers and agricultural source materials (ASM) consultants. The course provides an overview of the Nutrient Management Act, including key definitions and requirements of the Act, Regulation and Protocols. The course also reviews the basics of preparing a NMS/P, implementing a NMS/P and compliance under the NMA.

There are two ways to take this course:

Option 1 - Regulation and Protocols Course - Classroom version

This two-day classroom course is offered at sites across Ontario on a set schedule.

Option 2 - Regulation and Protocols Course - Online version

This version of the course offers the learner an opportunity to study from home at their own pace and convenience using their own computer and an Internet connection.

For more information regarding the courses, visit the Nutrient Management Training Course Overview.

Applying for the Certificate

After you fulfill the requirements, mail a completed application to the address indicated on the form.

- Application for Agricultural Operation Planning Certificate

Certificate Conditions

Under section 108 of the Regulation, the Director may issue a certificate or licence subject to any conditions that he/she considers appropriate. This may include conditions that are consented to by the applicant, imposed by a Director or ordered by the Tribunal.

Refusal to Issue a Certificate or Licence

Under s. 109(1), the Director may refuse to issue a certificate or licence if:

- the applicant is in contravention of the Act or this Regulation, or is in breach of a condition of another certificate or licence issued under Part X;
- the applicant is not competent to carry on the activity that would be authorized by the certificate or licence; or
- the past conduct of the applicant affords reasonable grounds for belief that the activity that would be authorized by the certificate or licence will not be carried on with honesty and integrity.

Certificate Renewals

Certificates are valid for five years from the date of issue. To obtain another certificate, applicants will need to follow the same requirements as someone who has never held the certificate (i.e. take the required courses). If the courses they have taken in the past are still current, they may request an equivalency from the Director. However, it is strongly recommended the courses are taken again as a refresher.

It is your responsibility to know the expiry date of your certificate and to take the required action to obtain another certificate. It is suggested that you begin the process well in advance of your certificate expiry date to allow you the opportunity to take courses.

For a copy of the renewal application form, visit the Application for Agricultural Operation Planning Certificate page.

Additional Expectations

Stay Current in Your Field

Certificate holders are expected to keep up to date with the nutrient management legislation and actively pursue additional learning opportunities to remain competent in the field of nutrient management. This may include update sessions offered by OMAFRA.

Performance Guidelines

A set of performance guidelines has been developed by OMAFRA that goes beyond the regulatory requirements, skills and knowledge listed in the core competencies. These guidelines are intended to provide consistent guiding

principles for AOP Certificate holders that reflect best management practices for the industry. They outline practices followed by certificate holders providing good professional services to their clients. AOP Certificate holders are encouraged to follow these guidelines in their daily practice.

Other Considerations

A pre-approval site visit may be conducted for the first NMS/P submitted by the AOP Certificate holder.