

Fertcare Accredited Advisor licensing

The aim of the Fertcare Accredited Advisor (FAA) program is to provide farmers with confidence that they are receiving fertilizer advice based on soil and or plant testing of a high standard and that matters such as the process of making recommendations, the underlying supporting data, sampling methodology and laboratory competence are based on good practice and accepted science in Australia.

Jeff Kraak, Fertcare Program Manager, believes that having a healthy number of Fertcare Accredited Advisors will help the fertilizer industry to continue building its credibility with regulators, government, the public and ultimately farmers.

The process of becoming a FAA has been changed and simplified, so that the accreditation process includes licensing of all individuals using an assessed system such as Nutrient Advantage Advice.

Mr Kraak said that under the previous system, a FAA working for a licensed organisation was automatically licensed. If an Accredited Advisor was working for an organisation that was not licensed, he or she could apply for an individual licence.

“Many Accredited Advisors covered by an accredited system such as Nutrient Advantage Advice but working for non-licensed organisations have not been applying on an individual basis,” Mr Kraak said.

“As a result, we were missing the opportunity to create a large pool of Fertcare Accredited Advisors who are licensed to use the Fertcare logo and demonstrate the value of the Fertcare approach.

“It is also in the interests of those systems which have benefited from significant investments in accreditation to see these benefits broadly realised.”

After implementing the FAA changes, there has been a four-fold increase in the number of Fertcare Accredited Advisors in the past few months. Currently, there are 317 FAA across Australia.

Authorised users of Nutrient Advantage Advice who have a Fertcare Level C certificate are eligible and encouraged to use the FAA logo on recommendations and other personal communication with customers e.g. email signatures. Please refer to page 9 of the Fertcare Style Guide for details on how the trade mark protected logo can be used. (http://www.fifa.asn.au/default.asp?V_DOC_ID=1156)

Please be aware FAA systems such as Nutrient Advantage Advice are audited every 2 years to ensure standards are maintained and new information is incorporated as it becomes available. Recommendations FAA's undertake maybe called upon in the systems audit process.

Under the new system:

- the organisation licence has been modified so that individual advisors can be nominated as part of the licence for a fee of \$50 per person;
- the process for systems approvals and biennial audits will include licensing of all advisors using the system at a fee of \$50 each; and
- the process for individual advisors to apply for a licence will remain the same, with a fee of \$50.

In the future, greater awareness of Fertcare and the FAA will be generated amongst farmers particularly where the environmental risks associated with fertilizer use are high in regions such as the North Qld coast, the Swan Coastal Plain in WA and some intensive dairy areas.

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