



Fertilizer Australia, Incorporated.
Reg. No. A0025290C, ABN 71 395 757 876, ARBN 106 743 015



**Australian Fertiliser Services Association
Limited**
ABN 41 603 301 266

Fertcare® Training Summary

Fertcare® trains fertilizer industry staff in the competencies required to meet their responsibilities for food safety and environmental risk management. It includes the competency to warn, advise and refer customers to information about the risks and how to manage them.

Fertcare is delivered at three levels that match the specific needs of different fertilizer support roles as described below.

Fertcare Level A

Target Participants: Level A is suitable for people involved in the direct handling of fertilizers, particularly in relation to transport, storage, spreading and general rural merchandise roles who will benefit from material that is relatively simple to understand.

Subject Matter: Level A training requires the completion of a compulsory core module – Product Knowledge (mapped to AHCWRK307) – which provides a basic understanding of fertilizer, composts and soil ameliorant products including:

- physical identification
- understanding labels
- storage and handling characteristics
- the main environmental and food safety risks.

Level A also has four elective units:

- spreading (mapped to AHCMOM306)
- storage (mapped to AHCWRK308)
- transport (mapped to AHCLSK322)
- Customer service (mapped to BSBCUS201B)

Each of these elective units runs for approximately half a day, addressing the environmental and OH&S issues specific to each job.

Fertcare Level B

Target Participants: Level B is suitable for sales staff who spend a significant proportion of their time on fertilizers or people who discuss fertiliser types and use with growers but do not carry out soil or plant test interpretations. The material is considered medium in complexity.

Subject Matter: Level B training provides basic education in soil and plant nutrition enabling sales staff to improve communication with their customers. Level B is mapped to AHCMER406. It can be combined with company specific training to deliver effective sales skills and meet stewardship objectives. Level B also covers logistics and OH&S issues at an awareness level.

The main subject areas addressed are:

- soils and nutrients
- fertilizers
- application methods
- environment and food safety
- regulation
- sampling
- logistics

It aims to improve participant's knowledge of fertilizer products while enabling them to provide warnings and simple advice. Importantly, Level B emphasises the need to refer customers to Fertcare Accredited Advisors where appropriate.

Level B participants need to allow time to undertake pre workshop reading and associated tasks prior to attending a one day workshop.

Fertcare Level C

Target Participants: Level C is suitable for people providing soil and fertilizer advice based on soil and plant analysis.

Subject Matter: Level C training covers the detailed and complex knowledge of environmental issues, including the use of a fertilizer environmental risk assessment and management methodology. It is mapped to AHPCPM505.

Level C training covers:

- environmental issues
- food safety
- use of the Fertilizer Environmental Stewardship Review methodology (FESR)
- sampling
- the regulatory framework and label requirements
- an awareness of OH&S and stewardship issues in transport, storage, handling and application of fertilizers.

Competencies in providing detailed nutrient advice based on soil and plant testing are considered a prerequisite for Level C training.

Level C participants need to allow time to undertake pre workshop reading and associated tasks prior to attending a one day workshop.

General

Fertcare training is delivered nationally by independent and qualified providers, through a Registered Training Organisation (Bendigo TAFE). Each training course meets national competency standards under the Australian Qualifications Framework. Individuals can attain statements of competency by successfully completing the courses and there may be used as part of a formal qualification (e.g. Certificate III in Rural Operations).

More information on Fertcare training including upcoming public training opportunities and the other components of the program (i.e. Accredited Advisor and Accu-Spread) can be found at www.fertcare.com.au

Fertcare Accredited Advisor Program

The Fertcare Accredited Advisor (FAA) program is separate to, but complementary to Fertcare Level C training.

Why Should an Agronomist Consider Becoming a Fertcare Accredited Advisor?

- **Symbol of High Quality Advice:** The FAA logo signifies the provision of high quality, independently audited advice based on sound practices and accepted science to promote farm productivity while protecting the environment.
- **Continuous Improvement:** The process of accreditation invariably leads to improvements in the quality and or consistency of advice.
- **Supply Chain Assurance:** Nutrient management, along with off-site impacts e.g. eutrophication feature amongst the issues that are of high priority to the community, consumers and marketers of branded food and fibre products. Assurance on these issues is increasing being sought throughout the supply chain. In seeking this assurance, not only are the practices employed by farmers to produce the food and fibre being scrutinised, but also the quality and source of professional advice farmers receive is also being questioned by resource manager's and branded food and fibre processing companies. The FAA is well positioned to address these matters.



Purpose of the Fertcare Accredited Advisor Program:

The purpose of the FAA program is to provide farmers and other stakeholders with confidence that farm managers are receiving soil management and fertilizer advice based on soil and or plant testing of a high standard. Assurance is given on matters such as the process of making recommendations, the underlying supporting data, sampling methodology and laboratory competence.

What is Involved in the Fertcare Accredited Advisor Program?

The FAA program provides an objective basis to assess the competence of advisors to make nutrient recommendations. The 3rd party assessment is based on standards set by the Australasian Soil and Plant Analysis Council (ASPAC), which have been mapped to national competencies (i.e. AHCWRK301, AHCP402 & AHCP505) from the Rural Training Package. The standards cover sampling, analysis, interpretation, recommendation and monitoring. Recommendations are tested for completeness and for appropriate management of environmental and food safety risks. The standards are based on accepted scientific consensus with ASPAC providing advice on any dispute or review.

Program participants who meet the requirements of the program are encouraged to display the FAA logo (top right on this page) on recommendations and personal communication such as business cards and email signatures etc. and let their customers know what the logo stands for.

How to become a Fertcare Accredited Advisor:

1. Successfully complete Fertcare Level C training.
2. Undertake a FAA assessment either on an individual basis or become an authorised user of a Fertcare assessed nutrient advisory system e.g. Nutrient Advantage Advice (NAA) and SoilMate.

Many advisors use nutrient decision support systems to interpret soil and plant analysis results and aid the creation of recommendations. Systems which have been Fertcare assessed by an independent auditor are able to offer various levels of Fertcare service to their users.

For NAA users, the most common way to be recognised as a FAA is to successfully completing Agronomy in Practice and Fertcare Level C.

For SoilMate users, the most common way to be recognised as a FAA is to successfully completing Better Soils Management and Fertcare Level C.

Once an advisor has been assessed as competent they are then subject to a biennial audit of randomly selected recommendations made in the preceding two year period. The audit is a quality assurance process to ensure that the competence is being routinely applied, and provides mechanisms to improve and rectify any underperformance.

For more details on the process of becoming a FAA and a list of those who are already recognised, head to www.fertcare.com.au and click on Trusted Advisor.

Who Can Enter the Fertcare Accredited Advisor Program?

The FAA program is open to anyone who meets the requirements of the program including advisors working within the fertilizer supply chain and independent agronomists providing details nutrient management plans and fertilizer advice to farmers.

More Information:

Detailed information on the FAA program is contained within the Fertcare Accredited Advisor Program Manual available from www.fertcare.com.au The website also has contact details of the approved assessors. Alternatively contact the Fertcare Program Manager, Jeff Kraak (E: jeff.kraak@fertilizer.org.au or M: 0407 663535).