

Proposal(s): 2026 Certification Proposals  
Source: Certification Committee  
Meeting: August 21, 2025  
Approved for Public Comment

## Proposals

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### August 21, 2025: Changes to Standards

Action	Section	Category	Standard	Question
Delete	Crop & Environmental Management: Integrated Pest Management	Additional Medium	Look for and count beneficial insects when you are scouting.	Do you look for and count beneficial insects when you are scouting?
Delete	Crop & Environmental Management: Integrated Pest Management	Additional Medium	Use appropriate methods such as washing, steaming, bleaching, or use of commercial tray cleaner to clean or sanitize transplant trays in the production of seedlings.	Are trays used in the production of seedlings cleaned or sanitized using appropriate methods such as washing, steaming, bleaching, or use of commercial tray cleaner?
Add	Crop & Environmental Management: Soil & Water Management	Additional Medium <i>(will not take away points but only reward points for use)</i>	Use biodegradable float trays that contain EVRgreen® biodegradable technology or reusable plastic trays.	(a) Do you use a biodegradable float tray or reusable plastic trays (dropdown: neither, biodegradable, plastic)? (b) Are you able to dispose of the biodegradable float trays at the landfill?
Delete	Crop & Environmental Management: Agrochemical Management	Additional Medium	CPA storage with impermeable floor. This includes tubs, bins, or containers used to hold CPAs made of impermeable material.	Does CPA storage have an impermeable floor? This includes tubs, bins, containers with impermeable flooring that can hold more than the volume of CPA being stored.

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Action	Section	Category	Standard	Question
Change	Labor Management: Farm Safety, Training, and Safety Equipment	Additional High	Have ready-to use fire extinguishers available within two hundred feet of curing barns when workers are present.  To  Have ready-to use fire extinguishers available in the barns and market prep areas when workers are present (can be in vehicles).	Are fire extinguishers present in the barns and market prep areas when workers are present? (can be in vehicles)

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## August 21, 2025: Changes to Application, Self-Assessment, and Visit Questionnaires

	Application	Self-assessment	Visit Questionnaires
Move “Farm Diversification and Sustainability” Questions from Application to Self-Assessment: Enterprises, Biodiversity programs, Successor	Delete	Add	
Move Dark-fired wood sourcing questions from application to self-assessment and do not ask them on the visit	Delete	Add	Delete
Move Flue-cured Barn Inventory and % mechanically harvested from application to self-assessment.	Delete	Add	
Move previous year yield questions and irrigation amounts from self-assessment to application.	Add	Delete	
Remove irrigation questions about source and method from visit.			Delete
Move Farm Infrastructure (barns, equipment, etc.) from visit to self-assessment		Add	Delete
Move pounds of tobacco per gallon of fuel from visit to self-assessment.		Add	Delete
Move Gold Star question from visit to self-assessment, “Are you a Gold Star Grower who has been recognized by the NC DOL's Gold Star Grower Housing Program?”		Add	Delete

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	Application	Self-assessment	Visit Questionnaires
<p>Change on visit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a first aid kit present and available at the edge of the field or in the field whenever workers are working in that field?</li> <li>Is a first aid kit available within the facility or in a vehicle within 200 feet of the facility in the case of curing barns, greenhouses, market preparation areas, machinery sheds, etc. whenever workers are performing work tasks there?</li> <li>Is a first aid kit available in vehicles used to transport workers on the farm?</li> </ul> <p>To</p> <p>Are there first aid kits present and around workers performing tasks at all times including when in field, barns, vehicles, greenhouses, market prep areas etc.?</p>			Change
<p>Change on visit:</p> <p>Are fire extinguishers present in the following areas when workers are present? (can be in vehicles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Near barns (within 200 feet)</li> <li>b. Near market preparation facilities (within 200 feet)</li> </ul> <p>To</p> <p>Are fire extinguishers present in the barns and market prep areas when workers are present? (can be in vehicles)</p>			Change
<p>Remove question from visit:</p> <p>Do you produce or purchase your tobacco plants?</p>			Delete

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	Application	Self-assessment	Visit Questionnaires
<p>Change question wording on visit:</p> <p>Does the grower use irrigation on their operation for tobacco production in the current year?</p> <p>To</p> <p>Did you use irrigation for your tobacco crop on your operation for the current season? Yes/No</p>			Change
<p>Change question wording on visit:</p> <p>Are records of sprayer calibration for the current season being maintained?</p> <p>To</p> <p>Choose method of sprayer calibration you used this season.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formula Method</li> <li>• 1/128<sup>th</sup> Method</li> <li>• Calibration App (same as formula method)</li> <li>• Spot-On Calibration Tool</li> <li>• I did not calibrate my sprayer this season. <i>(This answer will cause the grower to lose the points.)</i></li> </ul>			Change
<p>Change question wording on visit:</p> <p>Is there a current inventory of all CPAs stored on the farm updated monthly?</p> <p>To</p> <p>When was inventory of CPA's updated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning of season <i>(This answer will cause the grower to lose the points.)</i></li> <li>• Within the last month</li> <li>• More than a year ago <i>(This answer will cause the grower to lose the points.)</i></li> <li>• I do not store CPA's on my farm.</li> </ul>			Change

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	Application	Self-assessment	Visit Questionnaires
<p>Change question wording on visit:</p> <p>Are the following tillage practices implemented in tobacco production at the farm?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conventional Tillage? Yes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Number of tobacco acres in conventional tillage?</li></ul></li><li>• Minimum or reduced tillage? Yes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Number of tobacco acres in minimum or reduced tillage?</li></ul></li><li>• Strip Tillage? Yes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Number of tobacco acres in strip tillage?</li></ul></li><li>• No-Tillage? Yes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Number of tobacco acres in no-tillage?</li></ul></li></ul> <p>To</p> <p>Are the following tillage practices implemented in tobacco production at the farm for the current season?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conventional Tillage? Yes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Number of tobacco acres in conventional tillage?</li></ul></li><li>• Minimum/reduced tillage, strip tillage, or no tillage? Yes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Number of tobacco acres in minimum/reduced tillage, strip tillage, or no tillage?</li></ul></li></ul>			<b>Change</b>