



## Over 360 tobacco operations have already applied for GAPC Certification. Apply now!

All growers participating in the GAPC Certification program must apply every year in order to maintain Certification.

### How to Apply

1. Visit [www.gapconnections.com](http://www.gapconnections.com)
2. In the upper right hand corner, find "Log In" - "Log In to View Member Tools"
3. Enter your 6 digit Grower ID number (found at the bottom of your GAP card) and password. Passwords may be reset via email (if valid email address is on file) or by calling GAPC at (865) 622-4606.
4. Find "Certification", then "Apply". Click "Start One" to begin a 2021 Certification Application.
5. Complete the application. You know you have come to the end when you submit payment.

Growers may also call GAPC to request a paper copy by mail. Paper applications are an additional \$50 in administrative fees. More information about the Certification Program can be found on our [website](#).

### What's Next?

1. After submission, the application is sent to GAPC staff to review. It takes 2-3 business days for your application to be reviewed. Growers will be contacted if follow up is needed. Upon approval you will receive an approval email. Please be on the lookout for this email as it contains important information. Contact GAPC by phone (865.622.4606) or email ([info@gapconnections.com](mailto:info@gapconnections.com)) if you did not receive.
2. Have an Associated Grower(s)? Upon approval of your application, the Associated Growers listed on the application must sign-in using their **Grower ID and password** to accept terms and conditions. The Associated Grower will see a red box on their Grower Dashboard. Click and follow the instructions. All Associated Growers must accept terms and conditions before the application is considered final approved.
3. All growers listed on the Certification Application are required to complete Annual GAP Training by June 30, 2021. See information below on how to complete.
4. Complete the Self-Assessment if you wish to achieve U.S. and International Certification. We recommend this be completed by the time of your Monitoring Visit. The Self-Assessment is one per operation. See information below for more details.
5. Wait to hear from selected Monitoring Firm. In the application, you selected which Monitoring Firm you would like to use. You have been placed on their scheduling list and they will contact you to set up the monitoring visit.
6. Review the [2021 GAPC Certification Compliance Guide](#) to prepare for your monitoring visit. The Compliance Guide is provided to you at time of approval, and is available at [www.gapconnections.com](http://www.gapconnections.com). The Compliance Guide is your "road map" to Certification. It contains a Certification checklist, GAPC Certification standards, questions that will be asked of you at time of monitoring visit, what documents/records are required, remediation methods, and much more.

### Work with a consultant?

A [Consultant Authorization Form](#) must be completed and on file at GAPC in order for the consultant to speak on your behalf, reset password, or access GAP information. Please call GAPC for more information.



## 2021 GAP Training Options

Tobacco growers have options this year for completing their 2021 GAP Annual Training. GAP Training provides growers current information on research and information covering the three management practices; crop, environmental and labor.

1. **On-line Training:** Growers can complete 2021 training through their Grower Dashboard on the GAP Connections website at [www.gapconnections.com](http://www.gapconnections.com). Growers will need to login with their grower ID number and password. View step by step instructions [here](#).

Growers will have a selection of video courses to pick from in Crop & Environment, Labor and GAPC. Grower must watch 3 videos and complete 3 quizzes **from each section (9 total)**. Upon completion of each video, the grower will take a quiz and earn credits toward each management practice. Growers must score a 100% on each quiz for training credits to be recorded. On-line training offers the grower the opportunity to complete training at their leisure in their home or farm office.

Growers can check their Training Report to make sure training is completed by checking the Training Report on their Grower Dashboard at [www.gapconnections.com](http://www.gapconnections.com).

2. **Mail Training:** If unable to complete online training, growers can complete 2021 GAP Training by mail. Request a 2021 Tobacco Information Booklet and Quiz by calling GAPC at (865) 622-4606 or email [info@gapconnections.com](mailto:info@gapconnections.com). Please be prepared to provide your Grower ID number.

Growers completing training by mail will complete and return a quiz covering the information from the booklet. All quizzes must be completed and returned to GAP Connections postmarked no later than June 30.

3. **Additional Training Opportunities:**

- February 23 - Burley & Dark Tobacco Grower Zoom Training. Register [online](#), by phone (865.622.4606), or email ([info@gapconnections.com](mailto:info@gapconnections.com)). When registering by phone or email please have your Grower ID number ready to provide.

Watch the [GAPC training calendar](#) for more training opportunities as they become available.

## All GAP Training must be completed by June 30, 2021

For questions about training, contact Amy Rochkes, Training & Resource Coordinator, (865) 622-4606, extension 107

## The Difference Between Training and Certification

GAPC has received many calls from growers confusing Annual GAP Training with Certification Status...so what is the difference?

### Training.

GAPC Annual Training is done each year at no cost to growers. Annual training consists of three components; crop, environmental, and labor management practices. Growers typically attend annual GAP training at their county extension office or in conjunction with a company meeting. However, in 2021 growers can either complete training online or by mail.

Unless you are in the Certification Program, training is not required by GAPC. **Growers should learn about their GAPC Annual Training requirements from their contracting company(ies).**

### Certification

In 2018, GAPC launched the GAPC Certification Program to help growers distinguish themselves in the market place. The GAPC Certification Program is a three-year cycle. In each year there is application, annual requirements, and monitoring visit.

There are costs associated with the GAPC Certification program including the annual application fee and monitoring visit costs. GAPC Certification is not required by GAPC. **Growers should ask their contracting companies about any company requirements for GAPC Certification.**

GAPC has developed a comprehensive [GAPC Certification Compliance Guide](#) for growers that helps growers understand the expectations and requirements of the GAPC Certification Program. If you have questions about the GAPC Certification Program, contact Lauren Walker, Assessment & Compliance Coordinator at (865) 622-4606, extension 109.

**A grower is not GAPC Certified unless they receive a certificate from GAPC after successfully participating in the GAPC Certification Program.**



## 2021 GAPC Records

Options to obtain 2021 GAPC Records:

1. Contracting companies may be distributing GAPC Records at contract signing. Please contact the company for availability.
2. [Download editable PDF files](#) (NEW in 2021) from the GAPC website.
3. [Download Excel Spreadsheet](#) from the GAPC website.
4. Purchase from the [GAPC Store](#) for \$15.

## Keep Your GAP Records!

Growers going through a GAP Connections Certification Monitoring Visit may be asked a question that doesn't currently have a record. Example would be harvesting or NTRM inspection records. These are tasks that are usually completed late in the season and the auditor could be on your farm before the tasks have been completed. In these cases and others indicated in the [2021 Compliance Guide](#), you may be asked for the previous records to fulfill the requirement. GAPC suggests keeping the last three years of records.



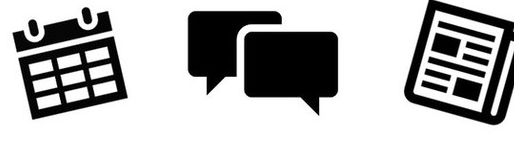
Complete the 2021 Self-Assessment by logging into your account at [www.gapconnections.com](http://www.gapconnections.com). On the Grower Dashboard find "Self-Assessment" then "Grower Self-Assessment".

### Reminders:

- The Self-Assessment is one per operation.
- If you have completed the Self-Assessment in the past, you will only have to complete 20-30 questions that pertain to 2021.
- Growers in the GAPC Certification Program are required to complete the Self-Assessment prior to the monitoring visit if you wish to achieve U.S. and International Certification. The Self-Assessment is not required for U.S. Certification only.
- The Self-Assessment will auto save every 10 minutes. This will cause the screen to blink and go blank, do not panic, it's just saving. We recommend clicking "Submit" often to ensure answers are saved.
- The percentages will update at the top of the page each time you submit your answers. Depending on the speed of your internet, the new percentages could take 5 to 15 seconds to update. Self-Assessment is complete when Crop, Environment and Labor show 100%.



## Events & News from Others



## Protecting Workers: OSHA COVID-19 Workplace Guidance

The U.S. Department of Labor announced that its Occupational Safety and Health Administration has issued stronger worker safety guidance to help employers and workers implement a coronavirus protection program and better identify risks which could lead to exposure and contraction. OSHA will update this guidance over time to reflect developments in science, best practices, and standards. Click [here](#) for more information.

## OSHA Injury and Illness Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements

OSHA requires all employers with 20-249 workers to submit OSHA Form 300A even if no accidents or illness occurred. The date by which employers are required to submit to the 2020 OSHA Form 300A is March 2nd, 2021. More information and link to submit online can be found [here](#).



## HR Legal Helpline

GAPC has a new partnership with Jackson Lewis to provide growers with a comprehensive risk management helpline service carefully designed to help manage workforce employment issues and reduce

exposure to employment related liability.

This helpline is free to all GAPC grower members. Growers can access the helpline by phone (833) 499-0275 or email [GAPConnectionsHotline@jacksonlewis.com](mailto:GAPConnectionsHotline@jacksonlewis.com). When contacting the helpline, please be prepared to provide, your name, GAPC grower ID #, location, type of issue, phone and email (if available). For more information visit [www.jacksonlewis.com](http://www.jacksonlewis.com). Subscribe [here](#) to receive communications from Jackson Lewis.



Like us on Facebook for all the latest news and updates about GAP Connections!

[www.gapconnections.com](http://www.gapconnections.com) 865.622.4606 [info@gapconnections.com](mailto:info@gapconnections.com)

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove®  
Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.  
View this email [online](#).

2450 E.J. Chapman Drive  
Knoxville, TN | 37996 US

This email was sent to .  
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.