

ATFS 2021 Standards FAQ for ATFS Leaders

When do the standards roll out? Have they come out yet?

The new 2021 Standards were enacted January 1, 2021. They are available for viewing [here](#). However, there is a period of overlap with the expiring 2015-2021 Standards.

Do I need to train again? When do I expire? When is that available?

Yes, **all** inspectors need to be trained to the new standards. **All** inspectors expire on March 15, 2021 unless trained to the 2021 Standards prior to that date. Inspector trainings will be rolling out in states after state facilitators are trained February 22. New for the 2021 Standards is an at-your-own-pace eLearning option that will be available sometime in April 2021. This will be available for all inspectors and not require them to sit in on a scheduled virtual or in-person classroom training. More information to come!

What about completing inspections until I get trained?

Required inspections completed BEFORE March 15 may be done using the existing 004 form, which is for the 2015-2020 Standards. After March 15, all inspectors must be trained to the new standards, which includes a new 021 inspection form.

What about CFEs?

CFEs are being submitted for inspector and facilitator training and will be submitted for the eLearning option. We expect the number of credits to be similar as the prior classroom training (3.5 Category 1 credits).

When is facilitator training available?

Facilitator training will take place during NLC 2021 virtually on February 22. More information on that can be found at <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/2021nlc>. Additional facilitator trainings may be available later as the need arises.

Do inspectors know about this?

Inspectors should receive Network News e-newsletter where information of the standards changes has been disseminated. Additionally, emails have been sent via the database to let inspectors know they are expiring on March 15, 2021.

Is there a new addendum?

Yes! It is available [here](#).

Is there a new 004 form?

Yes! It is called the 021 form (named for the year it was enacted). The new 021 inspection form is currently in development and will be available for use as the new facilitator and inspector trainings are rolled out in February 2021.

When do the 2021 Standards expire?

The standards should be in effect for 5 years, so 2021-2026. However, just like what happened with the 2015-2020 Standards being extended one year, things can change, so we elected to not name the standards by its full start and end years-- rather, just the start year.

What's different from the 2015-2020 Standards?

The chart below lays out the major changes to the 2021 Standards. Further clarification can be found via attending an inspector or facilitator training. A webinar version explaining the changes in depth can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/488583344>

	2015-2020 Standards	2021 Standards
Standard 1	Asked landowners for a commitment to sustainable forestry, but no specific mention of landowner education.	Addition of landowner education Landowners are highly encouraged, but not required, to seek out education opportunities including workshops, field days, professionals, online resources, etc.
Standard 2		no changes
Standard 3	Offered no guidance to landowners on reforestation resulting in conversion to plantation OR in afforestation of non-forest ecosystems.	Addition of 'conversion' guidance: •A plantation may be established to add economic or ecosystem value. •Afforestation may occur so long as the conversion does not have a negative long term effect.
	Landowners were encouraged to use native species for reforestation and afforestation.	Addition of 'naturalized species' Landowners may use native and/or naturalized species

		where appropriate for afforestation and reforestation
	Current and potential use of genetically modified trees was unclear.	Addition of guidance around the use of genetically modified trees. Current stock offered by ACF is NOT considered GMO per PEFC. ATFS commits to follow the emerging science and revisit as needed.
Standard 4	No requirement for landowner to maintain pesticide usage, outside laws and regulation requirements.	Additional requirement to maintain records of all pesticide usage. What kind of records? •Size/Scale/Scope •Addendum
Standard 5	Requirement to consult appropriate resources for T&E Species.	Clarification on what is an appropriate resource. •Qualified Natural Resources Professional •USFW or other credible resource •Periodic referral for updates
Standard 6		no changes
Standard 7	Requirement to consult appropriate resources for to identify special sites.	Clarification on what is an appropriate resource. •Qualified Natural Resources Professional •Resource reference examples listed •May still be landowner designated
Standard 8	Requirement that a landowner must monitor forest management activities.	Edited to include landowner's use of 'designated representative' for monitoring forest management activities.
Inspection Protocol	Inspections: •Initial	Inspections: •Initial

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Option •Required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Monitoring •Required
	All inspections required a field visit.	<p>Allow some inspections to be conducted remotely (i.e. without a field visit)</p> <p>Remote inspection require a full review of management plan documents and technology support of records (i.e. current aerial photo, remote sensing, or other technology)</p>
	States participating in a 3rdparty assessment had to also complete their Required Inspections in the same year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •States participating in a 3rd party assessment will complete an inspection for the entire assessment sample (i.e. every Tree Farm participating in the assessment). •They will consider their annual 'Required Inspections' to be 'Monitoring Inspections' and complete them at their discretion.
Eligibility Requirements	<p>Contiguity:</p> <p>A road under separate ownership , more than 84 feet wide, was defined as a break in contiguity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Significant rights of way, under ownership of other entities, may represent breaks in contiguous forest parcels. Significant rights of way are defined as at least 84 feet wide. •Guidance: Non-contiguous parcels that lie under a single ownership and management unit, but are separated by a significant right of way, road, etc. and do not meet the >10 acres to be a stand alone Tree Farm may be considered a

		part of the larger parcel for Tree Farm.
	Certified acres may include non-forested features such as food plots, water resources (lakes, ponds, streams), and other non-forested areas as long as they are an integrated part of the forest system.	Certified acres may include features such as food plots, water resources (lakes, ponds, streams), Christmas tree farms, orchards, and other non-forested areas as long as they are an integrated part of the forest system.
Inspector Training and Eligibility	All initial Facilitator and Inspector training had to be conducted via classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •All Facilitator training will be offered online. •In addition to Inspector training offered by states, ATFS will offer an online Inspector Training.
	<p>Inspector credentials expired within the life of the standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Required action by the inspector, i.e. conduct an inspection, take a refresher course, participate in an activity •Required additional record keeping by the State Program Administrator to keep credentials active. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Once trained to the new standards, Inspector credentials will remain active for the life of the Standards. •No refresher courses are required.
Inspection Form	<p>004 Inspection form Feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We KNOW that our Tree Farmers are doing great work...but we are not capturing that. •We miss being able to list landowner specific information (i.e. objectives/activities) in the form. 	<p>021 Inspection Form (coming soon!)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •We want to capture impacts, and we know you do too. •Form will remain in a format you are familiar with, just with some additional opportunities for you gather information.

	•We want to keep the inspection form simple.	
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