

ATFS Qualified Inspector Training Policy

The mission of the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) is to enrich the quality of America's woodlands by giving forest owners the resources and professional expertise needed to keep their forests healthy and productive. ATFS is the largest and oldest sustainable woodland system in the United States, internationally recognized, meeting strict third-party certification standards. In order to ensure that American Forest Foundation's Standards of Sustainability are being met and that landowners are receiving the expertise necessary to remain good stewards, inspectors must receive and maintain their ATFS required training.

The path to becoming a Qualified ATFS Inspector begins with meeting the minimum [Inspector Eligibility Requirements](#) and taking a 4-hour classroom Qualified ATFS Inspector training, provided by volunteer Facilitators at the State Tree Farm Program level. Research in the arena of adult learning suggest that practitioners must utilize technical knowledge routinely to maintain it. Drawing on best practices, after the initial training, **in order for an ATFS Inspector's credentials remain active, he or she must complete at least one inspection every two years.** This rolling renewal process will, then, extend the Inspector's credentials for another 2 years upon completion of each inspection until the implementation of the revised ATFS Standards of Sustainability in 2020. Thus, an Inspector's credentials will not extend beyond March 15, 2020.

As such, assuming an inspector is trained to the 2015-2020 Standards, they will not need to be retrained through an online or classroom workshop, so long as they complete at least one inspection every two years. If an inspection is not completed within that 2 year period, the inspector may update their credentials with our one-hour online refresher. An inspector's credentials for the 2015-2020 Standards will not extend beyond March of 2020. During this time, the 2020-2025 Standards will be revised and all inspectors will need to update their credentials to the revised Standards.