



To Whom It May Concern:

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification was created in collaboration with Texas Corn Producers and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Together, we have a vision to create a world with clean and abundant water, healthy soils and resilient landscapes, all while feeding a growing population with healthy, nutritious food. Our goals are to build a strong organizational support system, work with advocates to further the interest of the industry and promote thriving agricultural communities through voluntary conservation.

The creation of this certification is a response to our obligation to and interest in cultivating a diverse, well-trained workforce. There are few careers as noble as one in agricultural conservation and sustainability, since we are all alive because of soil, water, plants, air and animals. The industry certification tests over these principles, allowing certification candidates to prove proficiency. Earning the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation and Sustainability in Agriculture Certification prepares individuals to pursue a variety of education and career opportunities within the conservation and sustainability industry and is transferable to the many agriculture fields.

The certification provides value to earners who are wanting to prepare for their future careers or simply become more responsible consumers. The certification is also a valuable credential for working professionals who are looking to strengthen their position in their career fields. Possession of the credential signals to a variety of stakeholders, such as employers, that the certification earner has gone above and beyond to master concepts.

We take seriously our responsibility to help build an emerging workforce that is interested in raising awareness about the importance of conserving and managing natural resources. We are dedicated to developing future industry leaders and are confident the certification does just that.

Sincerely,

David Gibson
Executive Director

www.TexasCorn.org

806.763.CORN (2876) PHONE | 806.762.2874 FAX | 4205 N. INTERSTATE 27 | LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79403

August 15, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to give my support to the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation and Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. I worked for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Texas as the state public affairs director and supervised the NRCS staff who developed this certification with the Texas Corn Producers. NRCS fully supports this certification and has demonstrated that through the funding and staff time committed to it.

For more than 80 years, NRCS has helped people make investments in their agricultural operations and local communities to keep working lands working, boost rural economies, increase the competitiveness of American agriculture, and improve the quality of our air, water, soil, and habitat. With more than 10,000 employees, NRCS works in every county in the United States. Recruiting and retaining qualified staff members continues to be a priority.

This certification will help build a pool of qualified individuals in the agricultural conservation and natural resources fields. NRCS needs individuals with varied backgrounds as their work differs depending on the part of the country they work in. Having another educational venue that feeds trained and skilled employees into the pipeline would aid NRCS as well as the many conservation partners NRCS works with.

NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation and Sustainability in Agriculture Certification will have excellent value by better preparing individuals at a variety of career levels.

Sincerely,



Lori Valadez
Former NRCS State Public Affairs Director, Texas

Kathleen Kuester
PO Box 1403
Salida, CO 81201
719-221-6593

August 3, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing as a seventh generation descendant of a Colorado Ranching family. I am employed as the Chief Deputy County Clerk in Chaffee County Colorado. I am also a member of the Common Ground Board which disperses sales tax revenue to purchase agricultural Conservation Easements, and issues grants to local agricultural producers which helps them retain their lands and remain in business. I have observed the loss of much productive agricultural land in the State of Colorado, and the loss of water rights to large municipalities.

I am writing in support of NRCS Certification being offered by the Colorado State Career and Technical Education Department. Making sure that education specific to resource protection is available to the upcoming generation of students is extremely important. Employment opportunities in fields addressing the revitalization of land, water, and wildlife will be increasing exponentially. I also believe that this certification would benefit producers. Being up to date on resource management can provide another key to keeping agricultural businesses viable. I believe that the NRCS has created a Certification Program that addresses these needs perfectly. I urge you to make this extremely valuable and timely content available to Colorado students.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Kuester



October 2, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

I recently learned of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. I am impressed and excited with the variety and depth of relevant industry content and skills included. I am writing this letter in support of the certification and truly hope to see it implemented soon across educational institutions.

The USDA Agricultural Research Service is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's scientific in-house research agency. Our job is to find solutions to agricultural problems that impact Americans and Ohioans every day from field to table. At large, the USDA ARS team employs over 2,000 scientists and over 6,000 additional employees of all levels and backgrounds. In Ohio, our teams are currently involved with research and programs directly related to soil drainage, precision application technology research, water quality and availability, watershed management, ecology, and crop production.

I am strongly in support of bringing the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification to traditional and nontraditional educational outlets in Ohio. Both the environmental and agriculture industries house thousands of diverse jobs, often interconnected with each other. The introduction to these career opportunities and implementation of continuing education is essential.

The content embedded into this program builds a strong foundation to understand the many interconnected areas in our industry. This is done through the inclusion of soil science, water quality & conservation, horticulture, air quality, and animal sciences.

We know the creation of this certification was intentional and a direct response to NRCS interest in cultivating a diverse and well-trained workforce across the country. Earning this certification prepares individuals to pursue a variety of educational and career opportunities within the conservation and sustainability industry and is transferable to the many fields within agriculture.

I know that our team at USDA Agricultural Research Service plays a part in building, strengthening and developing our workforce. That is one reason I am excited to see this certification implemented in Ohio. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kevin King, Research Leader
USDA-ARS
Soil Drainage Research Unit

Midwest Area
Soil Drainage Research Unit
590 Woody Hayes Dr ▪ Columbus, OH 43210
Voice: (740) 815-9710

OHIO FFA CAMPS, INC.

3266 Dyewood Road SW | Carrollton, Ohio 44615

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www.ffacamp.com | ffacamp@ohioffa.org



October 4, 2023

Hello,

My name is Todd Davis. I am the Director of Ohio FFA Camp Muskingum. We are a 230-acre camp located 10 miles south of Carrollton, Ohio, on the shores of Leesville Lake. Camp Muskingum has a rich history of offering outdoor experiences to learners of all ages since 1942. We offer leadership, environmental and agricultural programming for individuals year-round, as well as providing a space for rental groups and value-added programming.

Please consider my letter of support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification.

Part of what allows Camp Muskingum to operate in the way we do are our talented team members. Each year, we hire teams of seasonal Outdoor Educators for the Spring, Summer, and Fall seasons. Individuals who seek out this seasonal employment with us often have an interest or a background in the Agriculture or Environmental Science fields – this is helpful, but it is not necessary.

I reviewed the material included in this certification and was impressed with the information covered. A certification like this would provide our seasonal staff with a foundation to build upon, or an opportunity for continuous education if they already have educational or work experience in these areas.

Each seasonal Outdoor Educator on our team has the ability to choose what content they teach to campers as it relates to the fields of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. Completing this new certification to offer further training in the following areas would be valuable to our team: soil science, soil conservation and health, water cycles, water conservation, native and invasive plants, conservation and management, animal food webs, habitats, and ecosystems.

In addition to our team at Camp Muskingum, I see value in making the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification accessible to learners in other educational settings – both formal and informal. Our industry needs experiences like this offered to individuals so they can spark an interest and become aware of career opportunities in both Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

Thank you for your consideration.

Todd Davis

Director, Ohio FFA Camp Muskingum



"Teaching, Serving, Growing Since 1942"



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

12 W Wenger Road, Suite 2
Englewood, OH 45322

October 18, 2023

Hello, and thank you for considering my letter of support.

My name is Jess Martin. For the last five years I have worked with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service as a Soil Scientist. Soil is not just a growing medium – it is a living and life-giving natural resource home to billions of bacteria, fungi, and other microbes that are the foundation for thriving ecosystems.

I recently learned of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. I read through the material that individuals would learn and was excited to see that soil science, water science, and plant science made up a large portion of the coursework. Our industry is incredibly interconnected and a certification like this would provide individuals with a foundation to build upon, or an opportunity for continuous improvement and training if already working in the field.

The scope of my work includes working alongside 17 Southwest Ohio counties to provide them with quality Technical Soil Services. My responsibilities include scientific work in the investigation of soils, their management, and their adaptation for alternative uses. Some of the skills I use include sampling soils, mapping & classifying soils, and identifying soil moisture & erosion. I work with Lidar and satellite imagery to assist in mapping soils and identifying land-use patterns. I collect, track and analyze data on wetlands subject to wetland conservation provisions to delineate their size and boundary for program participants.

I know NRCS emphasizes cultivating a diverse, well-trained workforce. There are many educational avenues and work experience that lead individuals to pursue a career in this industry. Experiences like the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification are crucial to expose learners to our industry and the ability to grow and specialize within it. There are many rewarding career opportunities in the field of soil science. This certification would provide exposure to them.

In my professional circle, I collaborate with and work alongside other Soil Scientists, Field Engineers, Geologists, Data Specialists, and other environmental science team members.

To re-emphasize, I am writing this letter in support of this certification. I truly hope to see it implemented soon in formal and informal educational institutions. Thank you for the opportunity to share the value of my industry and enhance educational opportunities for those in it.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jess Martin
Resource Soil Scientist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Preble Soil & Water Conservation District

Conserving our Natural Resources

2789 US Rt. 35 E
West Alexandria, OH 45381
(937) 456-5159
www.prebleswcd.org

November 20, 2023

To Whom it May Concern,

I trust this letter finds you well. I am writing to extend my support for the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. In my dual capacity as District Administrator and Technician at the Preble Soil and Water Conservation District, I have witnessed the profound impact that comprehensive certifications can have on our workforce, both at the entry level and in the realm of continuing education.

This certification, designed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, offers a robust curriculum covering crucial aspects of soil science, water science, and plant science. Its significance extends beyond initial skill acquisition, providing a foundation for professionals to build upon. As someone actively involved in conservation fieldwork, engineering, drainage, forestry, and pond construction, I understand the intricate demands of our work. Certifications like these not only enhance the capabilities of entry-level professionals but also offer a structured pathway for those seeking ongoing education and specialization.

The long-term strength of our workforce lies in its hands-on knowledge and adaptability. The NRCS certification aligns with our commitment to cultivating a skilled and versatile workforce.

By approving this certification, we open doors for individuals to explore and contribute to the dynamic field of conservation and sustainability. It is my sincere belief that such initiatives will not only empower the next generation of professionals but also strengthen the existing workforce with the knowledge and skills necessary to address the evolving challenges in our field.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this request. Thank you for your dedication to advancing education and professional development within our field.

Sincerely,

BJ Price
District Administrator
Preble Soil and Water Conservation District



Ohio Department of Natural Resources

MIKE DeWINE, GOVERNOR

MARY MERTZ, DIRECTOR

Jeremy R. Scherf, CF

Division of Forestry
9900 Brick Church Road
Cambridge, OH 43725
(614)212-3309

Jeremy.Scherf@dnr.ohio.gov
forestry.ohiodnr.gov

November 13, 2023

Hello. My name is Jeremy Scherf. I am reaching out as a representative of the Division of Forestry at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. I am writing to express my full support for the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification for learners in our state.

In my capacity as a State Service Forester, I am very much aware of the evolving needs and challenges within our industry. I work alongside a team of other State Service Foresters – all with educational and relevant work experience in the content areas represented. The certification aligns well with the comprehensive approach we value in managing private woodlands.

We have a severe shortage of candidates to hire. There aren't enough people choosing forestry and the other natural resources field to pursue a degree. Providing these opportunities for our young people is imperative to show them these wonderful career opportunities and providing a potential workforce for the future.

In an industry that is continually evolving, opportunities for industry certifications are invaluable. I would like to highlight the certification's versatility – making it an important tool for both entry-level learning (1) and also continuous improvement within our field (2).

1. This certification serves as a comprehensive introduction, offering a structured pathway to acquiring foundational knowledge across the diverse domains included. The clarity and depth of the curriculum make it an ideal resource for individuals embarking on a career in forestry providing them with a solid knowledge base that will set the stage for their professional growth.
2. Equally significant is the certification's role in fostering continuous improvement among seasoned professionals. While forestry is pretty steadfast in its principles, some areas are rapidly evolving like carbon storage and climate change, staying current with the latest research and best practices is so important. The NRCS certification facilitates ongoing education and skill development, encouraging our State Service Foresters and teams to remain at the forefront of advancements in conservation and sustainability.

The dual benefit of serving both entry-level learning and supporting continuous improvement positions this certification as a valuable asset for the holistic development of professionals at all stages of their careers within the Division of Forestry.

Respectfully, I encourage thoughtful consideration of the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification.

More Trees, Healthy Forests.

Sincerely,



Jeremy R. Scherf

Service Forester, Serving Guernsey County
Central Ohio Service Forestry Coordinator
Ohio Forest Tax Law Program Coordinator

April 26, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Hoosiers earning the Express Employment Professionals Career Preparedness Certification. This certification is valuable to anyone navigating entering the modern workplace. I too value this when reviewing applicants.

Since 1995, Orange County Economic Development Partnership has been acting out the mission to improve the quality of life of Orange County Citizens. In my role as the Executive Director, it is my duty to local businesses to improve the availability of a skilled workforce. An easy way for me to do that is to help see that employers have access to applicants that possess the certifications the employers are looking for.

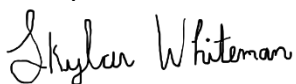
Individuals credentialed with the Express Employment Professionals Career Preparedness Certification understand the workplace and their role in a professional environment. They're also better prepared to apply for a job for which they're qualified. This is helpful to employers who don't want to waste their time on unprepared or unqualified candidates. The best part of this certification is it easily stands out on a job application versus someone describing the skills or experience they possess, which is often vague or nearly impossible to verify. Hiring managers easily identify candidates qualified for entry-level positions where this certification is listed.

It is imperative we have skilled workers for current and future positions in the county. In the case of attracting new business, when I can share that Orange County schools are certifying individuals in the Express Employment Professionals Career Preparedness Certification, it shows that Orange County has the talent necessary to meet employers' needs. It is harder than ever for Orange County's employers to find quality candidates, so I know our employers are eager to offer interviews to entry-level applicants with this certification.

Express Employment Professionals is a brand synonymous with career preparation as they work to recruit and place qualified candidates in numerous career fields. Candidates who have earned this certification have demonstrated the ability to enter and pursue a successful career.

This certification legitimizes the skills learned in this program and gives individuals the opportunity to stand out amongst others. This certification is extremely valuable to economic developers like me because it supports our communities' sufficient, qualified pipeline of competent individuals entering the Orange County workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Skylar Whiteman'.

Skylar Whiteman
Executive Director



505 S. Maple Street
French Lick Indiana 47432



812-936-3388



info@ocedp.com
ocedp.com/info



facebook.com/ocedp



516 Tillman St.
Memphis, TN 38112
(901)-366-7800

July 29, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Kesha Ivy, and I am the Chief Academic Officer of Junior Achievement of Memphis and the Mid-South. I am writing to you in support of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification.

Junior Achievement (JA) of Memphis and the Mid-South has been educating K-12 students about entrepreneurship, work readiness and financial literacy since 1955. Working with education and community partners, JA helps children discover the tools they need to own their economic success and build the future they want. More than 20,000 students participate in JA programs each year within our 71-county service area that includes schools in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification verifies individuals have obtained exceptional knowledge and skills in the areas of conservation and sustainability of various natural resources including soil, water, plants, animals and air. This certification was created to further the interest of the agriculture industry and promote thriving agricultural communities. There are a tremendous number of opportunities for JA students interested in agriculture, and I know this certification will set JA members apart and can give them leverage to negotiate higher pay.

Our dream at JA is that all students in Memphis and the Mid-South have the tools they need to build the careers and futures they want. Our service area includes many agrarian communities, and there's a plethora of agriculture-related jobs that value the NRCS brand and proof of foundational knowledge and skillsets related to the agriculture industry. Occupations related to this certification include forest and conservation technicians, environmental restoration planners, agriculture engineers, and more.

Junior Achievement of Memphis and the Mid-South is proud to endorse this certification for students because it sets individuals up for success as they enter the labor market, and that's our goal.

Sincerely,

Kesha C. Ivy

Kesha Ivy
Chief Academic Officer



July 23, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Carol Reed, and I am the Executive Director of the Tennessee Corn Growers Association. I am writing to support state approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification.

The Tennessee Corn Growers Association is farmer-funded and farmer-led, working to promote the future of corn producers and corn products in our state.

Created in collaboration with NRCS and Texas Corn Producers, the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification verifies individuals have obtained exceptional knowledge and skills in the areas of conservation and sustainability of various natural resources, including soil, water, plants, animals, and air. This is exactly what Tennessee's agriculture employers, like our members, need.

In a world that is growing and placing more attention and value on the environment, this certification is a stepping-stone for individuals that wish to enter our industry. In Tennessee, the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting industry is projected to grow by 7.19% over the next decade. This leaves over 3,000 jobs open for competent, qualified candidates to fill. The NRCS certification covers a variety of topics, giving individuals a well-rounded knowledge and skill set to utilize in any job they step into.

TN Corn is proud to support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability Certification. We believe that this certification has the potential to open many doors for those who earn it, and we look forward to the significant value that these certified individuals will bring to not only our organization but Tennessee's agriculture industry, as well.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carol Reed".

Carol Reed
Executive Director

7/18/2024

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you today in support of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. My name is Jacob Luna, and I serve as an Associate for The Context Network.

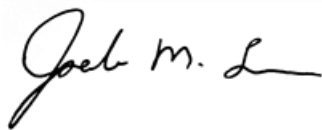
At Context, we believe in growing a world that is more productive, efficient, and sustainable. Our passion for agriculture is what drives us and is one of the main reasons why we have become the premier global and agribusiness consulting firm in advancing agriculture. Sustainability has garnered increasing interest and importance within the agricultural space and is a key practice area for our firm. We actively engage with clients across the global agrifood value chain seeking to further understand and develop strategies around this advancing sector.

The NRCS Certification verifies that individuals have developed exceptional knowledge and skills in the areas of conservation and sustainability of various natural resources including soil, water, plants, animals, and air. Certified individuals have a solid foundational knowledge of these industry standards would therefore be a tremendous asset to our team. It would save Context time and money in onboarding if we could hire individuals with the NRCS Certification.

I trust this certification because of who created it: two groups who have a vision to create a world with clean and abundant water, healthy soils, resilient landscapes, and a nutritious food supply to feed a growing population. This vision is synonymous with our own as we remain dedicated to being partners for advancing agriculture. Conservation and sustainability occupations are becoming more prevalent in our industry, and that includes Tennessee. In our state, Environmental Scientists and Specialists have a projected 160 annual job openings, earning an average salary of \$71,690 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification addresses the need for a talent pipeline filled with qualified and competent individuals. I hope to get to work with individuals equipped with this certification, and I urge you to approve this certification in the great state of Tennessee.

Sincerely,



Jacob M. Luna
Associate, The Context Network

August 2, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of The Corps Network, I am writing to express support for the *Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification*.

The Corps Network is the national association of Service and Conservation Corps headquartered in Washington, DC. The Corps Network supports Service and Conservation Corps through advocacy, providing access to funding and project opportunities, and by offering expertise in Corps operations and programming. Every year, The Corps Network's efforts help enable over 20,000 diverse young people and recent veterans to strengthen their communities, improve the environment, and transform their lives through service in Corps programs.

The Corps Network has partnered with NRCS/United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), AmeriCorps, and the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to implement the Working Lands Climate Corps (WLCC). As a program of the newly launched American Climate Corps, the WLCC will engage 120 young adults in technical skills training and facilitating climate-smart agriculture and forestry practices at 28 host organizations across 24 states and the US Virgin Islands. Through initiatives like the Working Lands Climate Corps, Service and Conservation Corps are preparing the next generation of climate and conservation leaders.

The *NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification* provides a solid foundation on conservation and sustainability practices for individuals seeking employment in the agriculture industry. This certification will provide Corpsmembers with a comprehensive understanding of effective land management, resource conservation, and sustainable farming practices. Additionally, the curriculum will equip members with industry-level knowledge and skills in natural resources, including soil, water, plants, animals, and air. This certification will offer a vital credential that ensures that Corpsmembers have a pathway to employment following their term of service while strengthening a climate-smart agriculture workforce across the country.

We look forward to the continued development of this and similar credentials to expand employment opportunities for Corpsmembers nationwide.

Sincerely,



Mary Ellen Sprenkel
President and CEO



Hoover INC.
1003 Tibbetts Ln,
New Windsor, MD 21776

September 22nd, 2024

Dear Whomever This May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in the state of Maryland. As the Service Manager at Hoover Inc. in New Windsor, I have witnessed firsthand the importance of integrating sustainable practices into our agricultural operations to promote environmental stewardship and ensure long-term productivity.

The NRCS certification program equips participants with essential skills and knowledge that are critical to modern agriculture. By focusing on conservation principles and sustainable farming practices, this program aligns with our mission at Hoover Inc. to provide innovative solutions that enhance agricultural productivity while protecting our natural resources.

Through our commitment to sustainable agriculture, we strive to support farmers in implementing efficient practices that optimize resource use. The skills gained from the NRCS certification will empower agricultural professionals to make informed decisions about soil health, water management, and habitat preservation—elements that are vital for maintaining the integrity of our ecosystems. Our products and services, which include precision farming technologies and equipment designed for optimal efficiency, can greatly benefit from the expertise gained through this certification. This certification will foster a new generation of leaders dedicated to implementing sustainable practices that benefit both farmers and the planet.

In conclusion, I endorse the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. I believe that its approval in Maryland will significantly contribute to the advancement of sustainable agricultural practices in our state. Seeing students with a certification like this would make them more employable to my company because of the skills learned to obtain this.

Thank you for considering this vital certification. Should you require any further information or support, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dustin Douglas". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "D" and a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Dustin Douglas
Service Manager
djdouglas@hoover.com

C.J. MILLER LLC

Excavating • Paving • Utilities



MAIN OFFICE

3514 Basler Road • Hampstead, Maryland 21074-1299

Phone (410) 239-8006

Cjmillerllc.com

October 1st 2024

Dear Whomever This May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification program, which I believe is vital for advancing sustainable agricultural practices in our state. As the Business Communications Specialist at C.J. Miller LLC, I understand firsthand the importance of integrating conservation methods into agricultural operations, particularly in our region, where the balance between productivity and environmental stewardship is crucial.

The NRCS certification equips individuals with essential skills and knowledge in sustainable agriculture, focusing on practices that enhance soil health, conserve water, and promote biodiversity. These competencies align perfectly with our company's mission to provide innovative and environmentally responsible solutions in the construction and agricultural sectors. At C.J. Miller, we prioritize sustainability in all our projects, as evidenced by our commitment to reducing environmental impact while ensuring operational efficiency. Having an employee with the NRCS certification, would help foster better understanding of these valuable topics and improve environmental needs that are highly prioritized in Maryland.

By fostering an understanding of conservation principles through this certification, we can empower agricultural professionals to implement practices that not only enhance productivity but also protect our natural resources. Furthermore, the knowledge gained from the NRCS certification will enable participants to better communicate and collaborate with stakeholders, including landowners, farmers, and conservation organizations.

In conclusion, I support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. This certification would benefit applicants for positions within our company and would have them stand out in the hiring process. By investing in this certification, we are investing in a sustainable future for our agriculture and environment alike.

Sincerely,

Trinity Miller

Business Communications Specialist

C.J. Miller LLC

tmiller@cjmillerllc.com

Finksburg Plant

Phone (410) 833-3780

Finksburg@cjmillerllc.com

Woodsboro Plant

Phone (301) 845-8784

Woodsboro@cjmillerllc.com

Freedom Ag & Energy
1862 Maryland Highway
Mountain Lake Park, MD 21550
(301) 334-3121

9/25/2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Suenette Pomeroy, and I am the Oakland Store Manager for Freedom Ag & Energy, a farmer-owned cooperative that operates across Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. This letter is written in support of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification.

Freedom Ag & Energy was founded in 2022 when seven locations across three states decided to merge, equipping us to better serve the rich tradition of agriculture and energy across this area. In addition to our traditional ag business, we offer products and services for home & garden, pet supplies, animal health, outdoor recreation, and more.

Knowledge and customer service are our top two priorities when hiring new employees. NRCS Certification validates knowledge and skills in the conservation and sustainability of soil, water, plants, animals, and air. This is extremely beneficial to employers, like me, when we can automatically elevate the level of customer service we're able to provide by offering help from well-trained staff.

Customer service and satisfaction are at the core of everything we do. Our customers are greeted by knowledgeable staff who direct them to products they can trust and depend on. Individuals equipped with the NRCS Certification would be the ideal job candidate for us at Freedom Ag & Energy. We look forward to hiring our first certified individual and know they will excel because of the value they bring to the table by possessing the NRCS Certification.

Sincerely,



Suenette Pomeroy
Oakland Branch Store Manager



January 32, 2025

6552 S US HWY 281

Stephenville, TX 76401

(254) 964-4288

To whom it may concern,

This letter is in support of the Natural Resources Conservation Service Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. As the owner and operator of Lovell Lawn and Landscapes, with over 20 years of experience in the agriculture industry, I am well versed to speak about the necessity and benefits of this certification.

Professionals in the agriculture field who obtain the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification demonstrate extensive expertise in key areas such as soil, plant, water, animal, and air management. These competencies are directly aligned with the core principles of this certification.

As an employer, I applaud this certification. When I interview applicants, knowing an applicant has this certification ensures me they have substantial knowledge and skills related to sustainable agriculture. This certification is extremely valuable to me as an employer because it helps me connect to qualified candidates and gives me confidence I am hiring the right workers for my operation.

I am excited to see where the Agriculture Sustainability Certification will lead these individuals. With this certification, so many doors can and will be opened. The future of sustainable agriculture will be elevated through those who choose to earn this certification.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arlon Feuerbacher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Arlon" being more prominent than the last name "Feuerbacher".

Arlon Feuerbacher

Owner and Operator

Lovell Lawn and Landscapes Inc.



NOCO Services

Est: 2018

January 29, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Alex Valicek, and I am the President of NOCO Services, a Texas-based construction company specializing in dirt construction for commercial, residential, and agricultural industries. As a young entrepreneur, I am deeply committed to supporting initiatives that strengthen our workforce and uphold the high standards expected in our industries.

I am writing to request state approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. This certification equips individuals with the technical expertise and hands-on skills needed to implement sustainable land management practices, optimize resource use, and enhance environmental stewardship—all essential components of responsible construction and agricultural operations. State approval would allow organizations like NOCO Services to identify and hire individuals who are well-prepared to contribute effectively from the start.

Currently, it is difficult to find entry-level employees with the knowledge of conservation, fuel efficiency, and land management required for success in our industry. The NRCS certification provides a reliable benchmark for evaluating potential hires, ensuring they possess the skills needed to meet industry demands. We value this certification so highly that we would offer hiring preference and consider higher pay for earners. Additionally, I wish all of our current employees had this certification, as it would enhance the efficiency and sustainability of our operations.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the state of Texas to approve the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. As a leader in my industry, I believe this certification is critical to strengthening our workforce and supporting the long-term success of Texas businesses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Valicek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Alex Valicek
President
NOCO Services



Zach & Lauren Brown
512-968-3972
zbltshowcalves@gmail.com



February 14, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As the owner of ZBLT Show Calves, I am writing to express my strong support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. This certification plays a vital role in preparing individuals with the knowledge and skills required to implement sustainable and environmentally responsible practices in agriculture, directly addressing the critical needs of operations like ours.

At ZBLT Show Calves, we are committed to producing high-quality cattle while ensuring the long-term sustainability of our operation. We understand the importance of incorporating environmentally responsible practices, such as rotational grazing and efficient water management, to ensure the health of our land and cattle for years to come. While there are many dedicated individuals entering the workforce, we have observed that many require additional training in areas such as soil conservation, water management, and sustainable land use. The NRCS Certification fills this gap by preparing candidates with hands-on, industry-specific expertise that allows them to contribute immediately and effectively to sustainable agricultural practices.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification ensures that individuals possess a strong educational foundation in conservation and sustainability, making them well-equipped to address the challenges that agricultural operations face in managing natural resources. This certification empowers employers like us to onboard skilled employees who are prepared to uphold the standards of excellence that our clients and the industry expect, while also ensuring the long-term viability of our land and livestock.

I support the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in the state of Texas. The approval of this certification is a critical step toward building a more knowledgeable, capable, and environmentally responsible workforce that will drive the agricultural industry forward, benefiting both our operations and the broader community.

Sincerely,

Zach Brown

ZBLT Show Calves/ GS Camps and Coaching
Owner

Be Honest. Be Humble. Serve Others.



February 19, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Co-Owner of Habitat Land Services, LLC, I am pleased to express my strong support for the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in the state of Texas. Our company specializes in land acquisition, habitat development, and environmental compliance, aiming to create sustainable, multi-generational investments in land. A certification that equips individuals with comprehensive knowledge in conservation and sustainability of natural resources is invaluable to our mission.

Finding knowledgeable and skilled entry-level employees can be challenging for us. The specialized nature of our work requires a deep understanding of soil health, water resource management, plant science, and wildlife conservation. We find that candidates sometimes lack this essential expertise, making it difficult to find qualified individuals who can contribute effectively from the outset.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification addresses this gap by validating individuals' proficiency in critical areas such as soil, water, air, plants, and animals. By ensuring that candidates have mastered these competencies, the certification enhances our ability to identify and hire professionals who are well-prepared to excel in roles that demand both technical knowledge and practical skills. This alignment between the certification's curriculum and our operational needs would significantly streamline our hiring process and improve project outcomes.

In conclusion, the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in Texas would be a substantial asset to businesses like ours. It would not only elevate the standard of expertise among entry-level professionals but also support the development of sustainable land management practices across the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Tim Soderquist".

Tim Soderquist

Co-Owner, Habitat Land Services, LLC

DAVIS

March 3, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

The ability to understand and implement conservation and sustainability practices in agriculture is vital to the future of Texas' agricultural and environmental landscapes. A knowledgeable workforce is essential to ensure that our land, water, and natural resources are managed responsibly and effectively. The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification provides individuals with the critical skills needed to address these challenges, and I strongly support its approval in Texas.

At Texas Tech University's Gordon W. Davis College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, we recognize the importance of industry-recognized certifications in preparing individuals for successful careers in agriculture. Those who earn the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification demonstrate a strong understanding of conservation practices, sustainable land management, and environmental stewardship—skills that are in high demand by employers. I would confidently consider a certified candidate over one without this credential, as professionals with this expertise bring significant value to agricultural operations, helping to balance productivity with sustainability.

Texas is a leader in agriculture and ensuring that our workforce is equipped with the knowledge of sustainable practices is essential to maintaining this leadership. Approving the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification will help secure a pipeline of qualified professionals ready to tackle the evolving challenges of our industry while preserving our natural resources for future generations.

I fully support the inclusion of this certification in Texas' approved programs and encourage its recognition as a valuable industry credential.

Sincerely,



Clint Krehbiel
Dean

BOX 42123 • LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79409-2123 • 806.742.2808 • DAVISCOLLEGE.TTU.EDU



TEXAS TECH™



March 5, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Chief Dam Safety Engineer for the Sabine River Authority of Texas, I am pleased to express my full support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. Our organization is responsible for managing water resources, maintaining critical infrastructure, and supporting sustainable practices across the Sabine River Basin. The knowledge and skills acquired through this certification, including conservation techniques, sustainability practices, and environmental stewardship, are directly aligned with our need for skilled professionals who can effectively manage and protect natural resources in a way that ensures long-term environmental health.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification plays a vital role in preparing individuals with the technical expertise and firsthand experience necessary to implement sustainable agricultural practices and conservation strategies. This certification adds significant value to potential employees, and as a result, I am committed to offering competitive compensation to certified individuals. I will prioritize certified candidates in our hiring process and offer interviews to those who have earned this credential, recognizing the added value they bring to our organization. Certified employees bring both technical proficiency and a deep understanding of sustainability, which are essential to advancing our mission of responsible environmental management.

By approving the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in Texas, we can better prepare the next generation of professionals focused on conservation and sustainability while strengthening organizations like ours that rely on effective resource management to support both agriculture and environmental health. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Andrew Balingit'.

Andrew Balingit
Chief Dam Safety Engineer
Sabine River Authority of Texas



February 21, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the **NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification** for approval in the state of Maryland. As an administrator within the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Nutrient Management Program, I recognize the importance of equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote responsible land and resource management.

Maryland's agricultural sector depends on professionals who understand conservation practices, soil health, and sustainability in food and fiber production. Certifications, like the NRCS certification, provide individuals with a strong foundation in these critical areas, helping to support the long-term viability of our natural resources and agricultural systems. Industry-recognized credentials help employers identify qualified individuals who are prepared to implement conservation strategies that balance productivity with environmental stewardship.

Approving the **NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification** in Maryland would benefit both individuals seeking to advance their careers and employers looking for knowledgeable professionals committed to sustainable agriculture. I strongly support its recognition as a valuable credential within the industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nicole Nagy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Nicole Nagy

AIR/AFAIR Admin Support

Maryland Department of Agriculture

Nutrient Management Program



March 13, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

The Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) is dedicated to advancing the field of sports field management through education, research, and professional development. A critical aspect of career readiness in the sports field management and turf industries is a solid understanding of conservation and sustainability practices. This is why we strongly support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. This certification equips individuals with essential knowledge in sustainable land management, soil health, water conservation, and best practices for environmentally responsible agriculture, preparing them for careers in turf management, landscape maintenance, and sustainable land use.

Conservation and sustainability are vital in the management of sports fields, where environmental factors such as water use, soil health, and resource management directly impact field quality and long-term sustainability. Professionals in sports field management who understand these principles can contribute to the health of athletic fields while also promoting environmentally responsible practices. Certifications like the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification help ensure that individuals are up to date with industry standards and best practices, improving both field management and environmental sustainability.

SFMA recognizes the importance of certifications in preparing individuals for successful careers in sports field management, and we fully support the approval of this certification. By equipping professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement conservation and sustainability practices, this certification strengthens the industry and supports the long-term success of sports field professionals.

Sincerely,

Jennifer McLendon, M.Ed.
Education Manager

March 10, 2025

To whom it may concern:

The Texas Wheat Producers Board and Association is pleased to support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. This certification, which was produced in partnership between the Texas Corn Producers and the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is critical to cultivating a more skilled, knowledgeable workforce in agricultural conservation and sustainability.

Stewardship is critical to success in the agricultural industry, and no one knows that better than wheat producers. It is of the utmost importance that producers and agriculturalists understand the entire agricultural ecosystem, including soil, water, air, plants and animals. Those who earn this certification have proven a knowledge of and passion for conservation principles and sustainability practices and are more prepared to pursue educational and career opportunities in these fields.

The value of this certification extends far beyond the agricultural industry. It equips individuals with essential skills for various career paths and fosters a deeper understanding of sustainable food production among consumers. Employers can be confident those who have earned this certification are committed to conservation, sustainability and are better prepared to be leaders for advancing stewardship practices across the industry.

Texas Wheat recognizes the immense importance of cultivating a workforce dedicated to natural resource conservation and management. This certification aligns perfectly with our mission to empower farmers through research, promotion, education and advocacy. We believe the certification will play a crucial role in developing the next generation of agricultural leaders who can balance productivity with environmental stewardship.

Sincerely,



Steelee Fischbacher
Executive Director



We create chemistry

March 19, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. Certifications are invaluable in ensuring individuals stay up-to-date with the latest industry standards and practices. As the agricultural industry continues to evolve, it is crucial for professionals to remain informed about the best practices in conservation and sustainability. This certification plays a critical role in ensuring individuals are well-prepared for the demands of modern agricultural practices.

BASF is committed to advancing innovation and sustainability across various sectors, including agriculture. We recognize the importance of skilled professionals who are well-versed in sustainable practices and conservation efforts. In today's environmentally conscious world, understanding the fundamentals of conservation and sustainability is essential for meeting the high standards expected by employers, clients, and communities. The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification equips individuals with the foundational knowledge necessary to implement sustainable farming practices, conserve natural resources, and enhance agricultural productivity.

As a company that prioritizes environmental stewardship and supports the development of sustainable agricultural practices, we fully support the approval of this certification. The skills and knowledge gained through this certification will contribute to the professional growth of individuals and the continued success of the agricultural industry as it works to meet the challenges of sustainability.

Thank you for your consideration of this valuable certification. We look forward to its approval and the positive impact it will have on professionals and the agriculture industry as a whole.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brittany Lloyd", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Brittany Lloyd
Global Head of Seeds Quality
BASF Corporation

Hashtag

#PlantScienceCertificate

Instagram

@basf_agproducts

Twitter

@BASFagro

Facebook & LinkedIn

BASF Agricultural Solutions



Brian Sikes
Board Chair and CEO

March 13, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Cargill is one of North America's largest agricultural and food production companies, committed to nourishing the world in a safe, responsible, and sustainable way. A key component of this mission is supporting a skilled workforce with expertise in conservation, sustainability, and responsible agricultural practices. That is why we strongly support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. This certification equips individuals with essential knowledge in soil health, water conservation, resource management, and sustainable farming practices, preparing them for careers in agriculture, environmental stewardship, and natural resource management.

At Cargill, we recognize the critical role that conservation and sustainability play in securing the future of food production. Responsible land and resource management are essential to maintaining soil productivity, protecting water quality, and reducing environmental impact. The skills validated by this certification align with our commitment to sustainability by promoting best practices in conservation, regenerative agriculture, and efficient resource utilization. Certified individuals gain expertise that contributes to improving environmental stewardship and strengthening the resilience of the agricultural industry.

We recognize the value that certified individuals bring to the workforce and are committed to supporting this certification's impact. In fact, I am willing to offer interviews to certified candidates, acknowledging their specialized training and dedication to sustainable agricultural practices.

In conclusion, Cargill fully supports the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification as a vital tool for workforce development. By equipping professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to advance sustainability in agriculture, this certification strengthens the industry and supports a more resilient and environmentally responsible global food system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Sikes", written in a cursive style.

Brian Sikes
Chief Executive Officer
Cargill

David Basinger, Chairman
Scott Buckles, Vice Chairman
Joe Freeman, Member
José O. Dodier, Jr., Member



Barry Mahler, Member
Tina Y. Buford, Member

Rex Isom, Executive Director

TEXAS STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

Protecting and Enhancing Natural Resources for Tomorrow

March 20, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Molly Christensen, Communications & Outreach Coordinator for the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB), and I am writing to express our strong support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in Texas.

As an agency dedicated to working with local soil and water conservation districts to protect Texas' natural resources, we recognize the critical need for a workforce knowledgeable in conservation practices and sustainable agricultural principles. The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification provides students with a strong foundation in soil health, water management, conservation planning, and sustainable land stewardship—concepts that directly align with our mission to support agricultural producers in implementing conservation practices.

Our Water Quality Management Plan Program and other conservation initiatives rely on individuals who understand the importance of resource conservation and can apply best management practices to protect Texas' land and water. By equipping students with conservation knowledge and practical skills, this certification will help prepare the next generation of professionals to support sustainable agriculture and environmental stewardship efforts across the state.

I respectfully request the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in Texas to develop a skilled workforce capable of addressing the conservation challenges of today and the future.

Sincerely,

Molly Christensen
Communications & Outreach Coordinator
Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

March 24, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Institute Director at the Texas A&M University AgriLife Institute for Equine Sciences, I am pleased to offer my support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. This certification provides individuals with essential knowledge in sustainable farming practices and environmental conservation, equipping them with the skills needed to make a positive impact in agriculture.

The certification ensures individuals understand key topics such as soil health, water management, and sustainable agricultural practices, preparing them to contribute meaningfully to the industry. Individuals with this certification are well-prepared for roles in agricultural operations and sustainability-focused organizations.

I fully support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification and believe it plays an essential role in preparing individuals to address the challenges of sustainable agriculture. This certification not only demonstrates knowledge and capability but also provides employers with confidence in the expertise and forward-thinking approach of the individuals they hire.

Sincerely,



Craig Huffhines
Institute Director
Texas A&M University AgriLife Institute for Equine Sciences

March 24, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As Executive Vice President of Production at Certified Angus Beef, I am pleased to express my strong support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. Sustainability and conservation practices are essential in today's agricultural industry, ensuring that we can continue to produce high-quality beef while preserving natural resources for future generations. This certification equips individuals with the foundational knowledge needed to implement responsible land management, water conservation, and soil health practices—principles that are critical to the long-term success of livestock and crop production alike.

Finding employees who understand the importance of conservation and sustainability in agriculture can be a challenge. Many candidates are passionate about the industry but lack practical knowledge of resource management and its role in efficient, responsible production. The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification provides a strong foundation in these areas, preparing individuals to make informed decisions that benefit both the environment and agricultural operations.

At Certified Angus Beef, we recognize the value of employees who are knowledgeable about conservation practices and their impact on livestock production. Candidates who have earned this certification demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and responsible agriculture, making them valuable assets to our industry. Because of this, we are willing to offer higher starting wages to those who hold this certification and are eager to interview candidates who have proven their dedication through this program. Supporting this certification will help strengthen the agricultural workforce and ensure a sustainable future for our industry.

Sincerely,



Bruce Cobb
Executive Vice President, Production



March 26, 2025

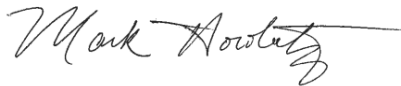
To Whom It May Concern,

As Manager of National R3 Programs at Ducks Unlimited, I am pleased to express our support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. Conservation and sustainability are at the core of Ducks Unlimited's mission, and we recognize the importance of educating individuals on best practices that support both agricultural productivity and environmental stewardship.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification ensures that individuals stay up to date with industry standards, equipping them with the expertise necessary to implement responsible land and water management practices. By fostering a workforce knowledgeable in conservation principles, this certification helps strengthen efforts to protect critical habitats, improve soil and water quality, and support agricultural operations that benefit both wildlife and communities.

At Ducks Unlimited, we recognize the value of certifications in developing skilled professionals dedicated to sustainability and conservation. We strongly promote the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification, as it plays a crucial role in preparing individuals to meet the growing challenges of responsible land and resource management.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mark Horobetz".

Mark Horobetz

Manager of National R3 Programs

Ducks Unlimited



Prime-Dirt

- Soil Fertility
- Compost

- Bio-Dredging
- Bio-Remediation

- Waste Management
- Odor Control

SOIL PROBIOTICS

March 28, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

As President of Prime Dirt Inc., I am writing to express our strong support for the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. At Prime Dirt Inc., we specialize in enhancing soil health through microbial products, aiming to improve crop yields and quality. Our commitment to sustainable agricultural practices aligns closely with the objectives of this certification, which emphasizes conservation and sustainability of natural resources, including soil, water, air, plants, and animals.

Identifying knowledgeable and skilled entry-level employees can be challenging for our organization. We seek individuals who not only understand agricultural practices but also possess insights into conservation and sustainability. This combination of skills is essential for ensuring the efficacy of our soil enhancement products and their impact on overall farm productivity.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification addresses this need by equipping individuals with expertise in natural resource conservation and sustainable agricultural practices. Recognizing the value of this certification, we are prepared to offer higher compensation to certified individuals and prioritize them during the interview process. We believe that supporting this certification will not only benefit organizations like ours but also enhance the overall quality and sustainability within the agricultural industry.

Sincerely,

James Henderson
President
Prime Dirt Inc.



March 31, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Express Employment Professionals to express our full support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. As the Vice President of Marketing and Communications, I understand the importance of certifications that equip individuals with the foundational knowledge and skills needed to succeed in sustainable agricultural practices, and this certification is crucial for those pursuing careers in agriculture, conservation, and environmental sustainability.

The skills gained through this certification equip individuals with essential knowledge in soil health, water management, sustainable farming practices, and land conservation. These skills are critical for promoting environmental stewardship, improving agricultural productivity, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of farming operations.

At Express Employment Professionals, we frequently place candidates in roles within the agricultural sector that require expertise in environmental conservation and sustainable practices. We believe that the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification will ensure that individuals are well-prepared to meet the growing demand for environmentally responsible agricultural practices.

We fully support the approval of this certification, recognizing its value in developing a skilled workforce capable of supporting sustainable agriculture and conservation efforts. This certification will play an essential role in addressing the evolving challenges of environmental sustainability within the agricultural industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important certification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rachel Rudisill". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rachel Rudisill

Vice President of Marketing and Communications

Express Employment Professionals



TEXAS AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE COUNCIL

1111 North Interstate Highway 35, Suite 208 • Round Rock, Texas 78664 • 512-450-0555 • www.texas.coop

March 26, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council (TACC), I am writing to express our strong support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. As a voice for Texas rural cooperatives and a staunch advocate for the future of agriculture, TACC is proud to endorse this valuable program developed in partnership with Texas Corn Producers and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

This certification is essential for cultivating a knowledgeable and skilled workforce dedicated to agricultural conservation and sustainability. Agriculture is the backbone of Texas, and safeguarding our natural resources — soil, water, air, plants, and animals — is critical to maintaining the vitality of our agricultural communities and the well-being of our state. The certification program's focus on fundamental conservation principles equips individuals with the skills needed to make a lasting, positive impact on the land and the agricultural industry.

By earning this certification, individuals not only build a strong foundation for diverse educational and career opportunities but also demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and responsible stewardship of our natural resources. As a leading advocate for cooperatives and agricultural sustainability, TACC is committed to fostering an emerging workforce that understands the importance of resource conservation and management. We believe that the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification will be an invaluable tool in building future leaders in this sector who are prepared to meet the challenges facing our industry.

We wholeheartedly support this program and encourage its continued growth and success. Thank you for your consideration and commitment to advancing agricultural sustainability in Texas.

Sincerely,

Christy Lewis
Executive Vice President
Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council



April 1, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As the owner of Paradise Point Park, an RV park on Toledo Bend Reservoir in Hemphill, Texas, I understand firsthand the importance of conservation and responsible land management. From preserving native habitats to managing water resources and ensuring responsible use of our land, conservation is at the heart of everything we do. Employees with a strong foundation in conservation and sustainability play a crucial role in maintaining the park's ecological balance. However, many job applicants do not have strong prior knowledge of soil health, water conservation, native animals, and land management.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification proves essential knowledge in soil and water conservation, resource management, and sustainable land, animal, and air practices. These skills are valuable not only for those pursuing careers in agriculture but also for businesses like ours which rely on maintaining and protecting natural spaces to make a living. When I see a job applicant who has earned this certification, I feel confident knowing they have the expertise and commitment to sustainability, making them an asset to our team. I will offer preferential interviews to anyone who possesses this credential, and I will consider starting them at a higher hourly wage. I'd love to employ someone with the knowledge and skills the NRCS Certification proves.

Approving this certification in Texas would help develop a workforce dedicated to responsible land management, benefiting both employers and the environment. I fully support the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification and believe it will empower individuals with the skills necessary to protect and sustain our natural resources. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristal May

Owner, Paradise Point Park



American Meat Science Association

March 13, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

The American Meat Science Association (AMSA) is dedicated to fostering excellence in meat science through education, research, and professional development. A critical aspect of career readiness in the meat and food production industries is equipping individuals with the skills needed to implement sustainable agricultural practices. This is why we strongly support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. This certification provides individuals with essential knowledge in sustainable farming, soil health, water management, and conservation practices, helping them contribute to the environmental sustainability of agriculture and food production.

Sustainability is a core component of success in today's agricultural industry, including meat production. The skills validated by this certification ensure that individuals are well-prepared to apply conservation techniques that benefit both the environment and agricultural productivity. Certifications like this one help individuals stay up to date on industry standards and best practices, ultimately strengthening the workforce and promoting responsible resource management.

AMSA recognizes the value of certifications in preparing individuals for successful careers in meat science and related fields, and we support the approval of this certification. By equipping professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement sustainable practices, this certification plays a vital role in workforce development and the continued success of the agriculture and food production industries.

Sincerely,

Deidrea Mabry, COO
American Meat Science Association

STREET FARMS
BARRY STREET
8495 FM 145
KRESS, TX 79052

March 27, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my full support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification and its implementation in Texas. As the owner of Street Farms, I understand the critical role that conservation and sustainability play in the long-term success of agriculture.

Certified candidates will have the opportunity to earn a higher starting wage at Street Farms. We recognize the value of the knowledge and skills demonstrated by this certification and are committed to compensating employees accordingly. I am also personally committed to offering interviews to candidates who have obtained the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification, as it signifies a strong foundation in responsible land stewardship, resource management, and sustainable agricultural practices.

The agricultural industry must continuously adapt to challenges such as soil health, water conservation, and environmental stewardship. Certifications like this are essential for ensuring that our workforce remains knowledgeable and prepared to implement best practices that promote long-term agricultural sustainability. By supporting this certification, we are investing in the future of our industry and fostering a new generation of professionals dedicated to balancing productivity with conservation.

I strongly recommend the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in Texas and stand ready to support its implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barry Street".

Barry Street
Owner
Street Farms



March 12, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of Elanco, I am pleased to offer my support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. As a company committed to advancing sustainable agricultural practices, environmental stewardship, and food security, we recognize the value of certifications that uphold industry standards and ensure individuals are well-equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in the agriculture sector.

This certification provides a strong foundation in the principles of conservation and sustainability, focusing on soil health, water management, and ecological balance. At Elanco, we understand that sustainable farming practices are essential to long-term agricultural productivity and environmental preservation. By certifying individuals in these critical areas, this certification helps develop professionals who can make informed decisions to support conservation efforts and ensure the future sustainability of agriculture.

Certifications are essential in maintaining industry standards, ensuring that individuals entering the workforce are knowledgeable about sustainable practices, resource management, and conservation techniques. Supporting this certification helps build a workforce that is skilled, informed, and prepared to contribute to the continued advancement of sustainable agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Stewart".

John Stewart
Adviser, State Government and Public Affairs
Elanco



Conda Maze, JRP LLC 9597 Jones Rd. PMB 366 Houston, TX 77065

March 21, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to wholeheartedly express my support for the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. As the owner of Conda Maze JRP, LLC, a company focused on livestock feed formulas and supplements, and with over 20 years of experience as an agriculture educator, I truly understand the value of certifications in developing skilled, knowledgeable employees.

Finding entry-level employees who are both knowledgeable and skilled can sometimes pose a challenge, particularly in fields that require specialized knowledge like conservation and sustainability in agriculture. Certifications such as the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification help bridge this gap by ensuring employees are prepared to meet industry standards from day one. At Conda Maze JRP, we value certified individuals and are willing to offer competitive compensation, as well as priority in hiring, knowing they bring essential skills to the table.

In conclusion, I firmly support the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification and believe that it will help build a workforce that is not only skilled but also equipped to address the pressing sustainability challenges in agriculture. It will benefit businesses like mine and individuals seeking to advance their careers in the agricultural sector.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Conda Maze', followed by a long horizontal line.

Conda Maze

Owner, Conda Maze JRP, LLC



April 3, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Owner and General Manager of Columbia Packing Co., Inc., I fully support the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in Texas. Sustainable agricultural practices are critical not only for the environment but also for the long-term success of the industry. With the growing importance of responsible resource management, farmers and agricultural businesses alike need employees who are well-versed in conservation practices, soil health, water management, and sustainable farming techniques.

At Columbia Packing Co., we recognize the significant value of sustainability in agriculture and are eager to see individuals with the expertise to implement conservation practices effectively. While it can sometimes be challenging to find employees with a comprehensive understanding of conservation and sustainability, the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification provides a perfect solution. This certification equips individuals with the knowledge and skills to support environmentally responsible practices while also enhancing productivity. We believe that employees with these skills can make an immediate positive impact, helping to improve both the sustainability and efficiency of agricultural operations.

I wholeheartedly support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification and believe it will prepare individuals to meet the evolving challenges of modern agriculture. I am proud to offer interviews to individuals with this certification and to provide higher pay to those who demonstrate their commitment to sustainable agriculture. By investing in this certification, we can ensure a more sustainable future for the agricultural industry, and I am excited to see how it will help develop a workforce that is both knowledgeable and committed to sustainable practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rusty Ondrusek", is written over a light blue circular background.

Rusty Ondrusek
Columbia Packing Co., Inc

March 31, 2025

Letter of Support for Industry-Based Certifications

TO: Selection Committee

FROM: Billy Zanolini, PhD
Associate Professor and Extension Specialist

I am writing to express my full support for the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in Texas. As an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife, I have witnessed firsthand the growing importance of sustainable agricultural practices and the need for well-trained professionals who understand conservation principles.

This certification provides essential knowledge in soil conservation, water management, sustainable farming practices, and land stewardship. Understanding these core concepts is vital for professionals in agriculture, environmental science, and natural resource management. By earning this certification, individuals will gain a deeper understanding of conservation practices that are critical for maintaining productive, sustainable agricultural systems while protecting our natural resources.

I also recognize the value of this certification in professional recruitment. Candidates who hold this certification demonstrate their commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable agricultural practices, both of which are crucial in today's evolving agricultural industry. By approving this certification, Texas would be investing in the development of a workforce that is prepared to address the challenges of modern agriculture and ensure the sustainability of our resources for future generations.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification offers a valuable opportunity to enhance professional knowledge and career prospects in the agricultural and environmental sectors. I strongly encourage its approval and fully support its potential to strengthen Texas's agricultural and environmental workforce.

Sincerely,



Billy Zanolini, PhD
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April 9, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As a Loan Administrator at Capital Farm Credit, I'm pleased to offer my full support for the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in the state of Texas. At Capital Farm Credit, we proudly serve rural communities and agribusinesses by providing financial services tailored to their unique needs. Sustainability and conservation are increasingly important to the producers we serve, and this certification represents a critical step toward preparing the next generation to farm responsibly and profitably.

One of the growing challenges in agriculture is finding employees and future producers who understand the principles of conservation planning, soil and water management, and sustainable production practices. These concepts are no longer optional—they are essential to maintaining the long-term viability of agricultural operations and ensuring that producers can qualify for important federal programs and funding opportunities.

This certification gives individuals a solid foundation in conservation science and sustainable agricultural practices, as well as an understanding of how these principles relate to economic and environmental outcomes. That's exactly the kind of knowledge we value at Capital Farm Credit. Whether working with a young farmer applying for their first loan or a multi-generational ranching operation interested in conservation programs, employees with this background are better prepared to guide and support our customers.

It's encouraging to see a certification that reflects current industry needs and promotes practical, real-world application. I would gladly offer an interview to a candidate who holds this certification, and I would strongly consider offering a higher starting salary to reflect the valuable expertise they bring.

Thank you for considering the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification. I believe it will help cultivate a more informed, environmentally responsible, and future-focused agricultural workforce in Texas.

Sincerely,

Madalynn Taplin
Capital Farm Credit



THE WAGGONER LAW FIRM, PLLC

April 10, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Owner of Waggoner Law Firm in Hillsboro, TX, I fully support the approval of the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification in Texas. Agriculture is vital to our economy, our communities, and the way of life in this region, and sustaining its long-term success is essential to the continued prosperity of farmers, ranchers, and landowners. Conservation practices play a central role in this, ensuring that we protect vital natural resources while maintaining productivity and viability for generations to come.

Having individuals with a strong understanding of conservation and sustainability is an invaluable asset to the agricultural industry. Those who are well-versed in soil health, water conservation, and responsible land management help create more efficient and environmentally sustainable operations. The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification prepares individuals to contribute meaningfully to the future of agriculture by equipping them with the skills needed to implement innovative, sustainable practices.

Approving this certification in Texas will help build a workforce of professionals dedicated to preserving the land and ensuring the continued success of agriculture in our state. This certification is essential to the future of sustainable agriculture, and I fully support its approval.

Sincerely,

David K. Waggoner, MS, MBA, JD



March 10, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

At Pilgrim's, we recognize the vital role conservation and sustainability play in the future of agriculture. Responsible land and resource management are essential for maintaining productivity, reducing environmental impact, and ensuring long-term industry success. Employees who understand conservation principles contribute to more efficient operations, improved environmental stewardship, and sustainable agricultural practices that benefit both businesses and communities.

The NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification provides individuals with essential knowledge in soil health, water conservation, land management, and sustainable farming practices. Candidates who earn this certification demonstrate a strong understanding of conservation techniques, resource efficiency, and best practices for maintaining environmental quality—skills that are increasingly valuable in modern agriculture and food production.

Recognizing the importance of this certification, Pilgrim's is committed to offering higher starting wages to certified candidates and prioritizing them in our hiring process. We strongly support the NRCS Fundamentals of Conservation & Sustainability in Agriculture Certification and believe its approval will strengthen the agricultural workforce, promote responsible resource management, and benefit both producers and the industry as a whole.

Sincerely,

Ansen Pond
Head of Operations
Pilgrim's



1770 Promontory Circle | Greeley, CO 80634



970.506.8000



pilgrims.com