

Certification program expands opportunities outside of North America

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Individuals living outside of North American will now have a greater opportunity to become certified through the ICCA Program. Photo courtesy of USAID/Afghanistan.

The International Certified Crop Adviser (ICCA) Program added a new feature for anyone living outside North America. This will provide an expanded opportunity for individuals to become certified and for members of the Societies with an international interest to get involved with the certification program.

The ICCA Program has certifying boards (local boards) throughout the USA, Canada, and Mexico. These boards review applications of those who want to become certified, develop the local board CCA exam, approve continuing education, and rule on ethics issues if they arise. The board members represent a cross section of the agricultural industry from the private sector, government, and academia. They implement the policies and procedures of the ICCA Program within their jurisdiction of a state, province, or region.

More Access, Inclusivity, Diversity

The new process allows individuals living in countries where the program's local CCA board structure does not currently exist to apply to become certified. This will expand access to the program, making it more inclusive and diverse. It will bring certification to places where it may not currently exist and establish a continuing education process to further develop the knowledge base. It may also introduce more people to the Societies' other benefits through membership.

This new process was made possible by the ICCA Program adopting Internet-Based Testing (IBT) over the past year. Being able to sit for the exams from a person's home or office took away the unintended barriers to expanded access of paper-and-pencil exams. In the summer of 2019, IBT was pilot-tested and then fully implemented as COVID started shutting down the ability to have in-person testing sites. Along with IBT, the ICCA Board developed and passed earlier this year the protocols for individuals to

apply. This included establishing a committee to review credentials before someone sits for the exam to ensure they meet all the requirements to become certified.

The agronomy, specifically, and agriculture, in general, should be similar to what is covered by the ICCA exam performance objectives. The primary language will remain English for communications, documents, and the exam. Pricing for exams and renewal fees will be determined by the economic categories established by the World Bank for each country.

To learn more about the program, please visit

www.certifiedcropadviser.org/international.

Agricultural Industry Engagement

In the future, as more individuals become certified in specific countries, there will be an opportunity to develop the local CCA board structure. The potential of having CCAs already in country will greatly help engage the agricultural industry by working with established relationships and to learn the cultural norms.

We see a natural link for individuals and companies who do business outside North America to help spread the word among their colleagues and employees about the benefits of being certified. Many agribusiness companies have their agronomy employees who are based in North America earn the CCA and CPAg credentials. Now the opportunity exists to expand.

If you are interested in learning about how you can get involved, please contact Luther Smith, the Director of Professional Development and Business Relations for ASA, CSSA, and SSSA, at [Send Message](#).

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