

# Farm Environment Plan Auditor Certification

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## Certified Farm Environment Plan (FEP) Auditor registration criteria

If you wish to become a Certified Farm Environment Plan Auditor as an individual (rather than as part of an International Standards Organisation Accredited Audit Programme), you will need to meet the following criteria as defined by the Land and Water Regional Plan (LWRP) and its Nutrient Management Plan Change.

1. You have at least five years' professional experience in managing pastoral, horticulture or arable farm systems; and you either:
  - (a) Hold a Certificate of Completion in Advanced Sustainable Nutrient Management in New Zealand Agriculture from Massey University, or
  - (b) Hold a tertiary qualification in agricultural science or demonstrate an equivalent level of knowledge and experience
2. You are a current member of a professional institute that is relevant to auditing, requires its members to follow a code of ethics and has a procedure in place for dealing with complaints made against members
3. You can demonstrate to Environment Canterbury that you are proficient in auditing Farm Environment Plans against the matters set out in Part C of Schedule 7 of the LWRP's Nutrient Management Plan Change.

Once you are certified, Environment Canterbury will add you to our Certified FEP Auditors register. The **FEP Audit Certification registration lasts for three years**. If you still wish to be a Certified FEP Auditor after that time, you will need to re-register.

If you are working on behalf of an International Standards Organisation (ISO) Accredited Audit Programme that has been approved by the Chief Executive of Environment Canterbury, you are automatically considered a Certified FEP Auditor. For information about Approved ISO Accredited Audit Programmes, go to [ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub](https://ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub).

## Application process

If you are interested in becoming a registered Certified FEP Auditor, you will need to:

1. Submit
  - a. A completed Certified FEP Auditor application form
  - b. Supporting documents as evidence of meeting the Certified FEP Auditor experience, membership and qualifications as identified above
2. Demonstrate you are proficient in auditing Farm Environment Plans by completing two audits, covering two different farm systems *where possible*, to the satisfaction of Environment Canterbury
3. Pay a fee to cover the assessment of your application.

Please note that if you hold Recognised Primary Industry Certification (go to [ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub](https://ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub) for more information), you will only need to meet point 2 above.

For a copy of the application form and information on fees and assessment criteria, go to [ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub](https://ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub).

## Re-registration

Certified FEP Auditors must re-register every three years.

If you are interested in re-registering, two months before your registration expires you will need to:

1. Submit:
  - a. A completed Certified FEP Auditor re-registration application form
  - b. Information on the audits you have completed within the most recent registration period, including:

- i. Copies of audit reports from the most recent registration period (three each year)
    - ii. All material used in preparing each audit
    - iii. Evidence gathered to support the findings you reached in each audit
  - c. Evidence that you have completed 15 hours of continuing professional development per year
2. Demonstrate you are proficient in auditing Farm Environment Plans by completing one audit to the satisfaction of Environment Canterbury
3. Pay a fee to cover the assessment of your application.

For a copy of the re-registration application form and information on fees and assessment criteria, go to [ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub](http://ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub).

## Continuing professional development

Certified FEP Auditors must undertake a minimum of 15 hours of continuing professional development each year in order to demonstrate their experience and proficiency. Please go to [ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub](http://ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub) for examples of recognised training providers. By completing continuing professional development to keep up to date with changes within the industry, you will be able to meet the FEP Auditor Certification competency and proficiency requirements. Environment Canterbury organises regular calibration days (opportunity for certified FEP Auditors to share findings, advice and knowledge) and compulsory training days which will count towards your continuing professional development.

## Annual fee and assessment

Certified FEP Auditors must pay an annual fee (go to [ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub](http://ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub) for details), which will contribute towards an annual assessment of your work. Our Certified FEP Auditor Assessor (the Assessor) will contact you to arrange the assessment. During the assessment the Assessor will check your proficiency in applying the Canterbury Certified FEP Auditor Manual.

## Revocation of certification

Your certification may be revoked at any point if Environment Canterbury finds that you do not meet the criteria described in this brochure. Environment Canterbury will work with the Certified FEP Auditor to remedy known issues and there is a process whereby Environment Canterbury may issue warning letters based annual spot-check results and non-attendance to compulsory training days.

Revocation of certification does not prevent an individual from re-applying to become a Certified FEP Auditor. However, you must demonstrate that you have addressed the issues that prevented you from retaining your previous certification and submit a new application.

## Disputes and complaints

You may be subject to:

- Disputes over audit grades and actions you provided
- Complaints about your conduct.

When we receive a complaint, we will inform you and will direct the complaint to the professional institute you belong to. The professional institute will assess the complaint. If it substantiates the complaint and revokes your membership, we will revoke your FEP Auditor Certification.

When we receive a submission about a dispute, we will inform you and we will assess the dispute. Please note we may ask you to attend an interview and submit a copy of the FEP audit report together with all the material and evidence you used to determine the audit grade and/or assigned actions. If the dispute is substantiated, we may revoke your certification and you will have to pay a fee to cover the dispute process (for more on fees, go to [ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub](http://ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub)).

## **Additional information**

For more information, contact our Customer Services on 0800 324636 or, if calling from Christchurch, 03 353 9007 – or visit [ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub](https://ecan.govt.nz/farmers-hub).