



To Whom it May Concern:

At the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA), it is our mission to advance professionalism in sports field management and safety through education, awareness programs, and industry development. As we push to continue to be recognized leaders in strengthening the sports field industry and enhancing members' competence and acknowledgment of their professionalism, our hope is to continuously advance with the changing times to meet more individuals everywhere. Therefore, we are proud to offer the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification.

SFMA is proud to have over 2,600 members nationwide ranging from sports field managers to students and even those who are retired. The SFMA community is a diverse combination of members who work to merge the science of growing turfgrass and the art of maintaining fields to produce safe and aesthetically pleasing playing surfaces. Members of SFMA have seen remarkable career success and recognition of their professionalism and work. We know the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification earners will also see the career success and recognition of professionalism that our members see.

The Turfgrass Science Certification will allow individuals to demonstrate a broad understanding of the knowledge related to the turfgrass science industry. Concepts such as turfgrass benefits, anatomy, identification, adaptations, environment, cultural practices, and playing surface preparation will all be addressed and evaluated. We believe this certification will give individuals a chance to prove their knowledge, dedication, and commitment to the sports field management industry.

Whether an individual is looking to pursue a career in turfgrass management and sciences, looking to become more competitive in the job market, or simply looking for a way to prove their abilities, the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will help individuals of all ages and backgrounds find meaningful work in the sports field management industry.

The Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification is an impactful step in growing the sports field management industry with qualified individuals.

Sincerely,

Jennifer McLendon, M.Ed.
Education Manager



Iowa State University
Department of Horticulture
107 Horticulture Hall
Ames, IA 50011-1100

6/4/2024

My name is Barb Clawson, and I am a Student Services Specialist III and Adjunct Associate Teaching Professor. As part of Iowa State's ongoing commitment to academic excellence and professional development, I am writing to propose the recognition and incentivization of individuals holding the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification is a significant achievement that reflects a deep understanding and proficiency in turfgrass science recognizing the importance of this certification, I propose the implementation of a structured program that guarantees an interview and offers higher compensation to individuals who possess the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification when applying for positions within our academic institution.

Here are the key components of this proposal:

Guaranteed Interview: Individuals with the certification will be guaranteed an interview for turfgrass management at Iowa State University. This recognition underscores our commitment to attracting highly qualified professionals who bring valuable expertise in movement assessment and rehabilitation.

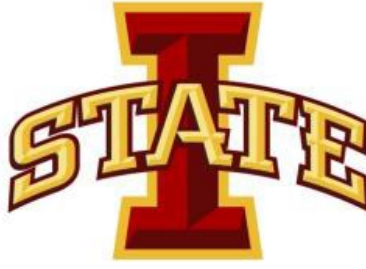
Higher Compensation: The expertise and commitment demonstrated by the certified individuals, we propose offering a higher base salary or additional compensation benefits compared to non-certified candidates. This serves as a tangible expression of our commitment to professional development and

I am excited to see where the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will lead these people. With this certification so many career doors can be opened, and I am thrilled to see the future of turfgrass science through those who choose to earn this certification.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

bclawson@iastate.edu

Iowa State University



Iowa State University
Department of Horticulture
141 Horticulture Hall
Ames, IA 50011

6/7/2024

My name is Adam Thoms, and I am an Associate Professor of Commercial Turfgrass. As part of Iowa State's ongoing commitment to academic excellence and professional development, I am writing to propose the recognition and incentivization of individuals holding the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification is a significant achievement that reflects a deep understanding and proficiency in turfgrass science. Recognizing the importance of this certification, I propose the implementation of a structured program guarantees an interview and offers higher compensation to individuals who possess the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification when applying for positions within our academic institution.

Here are the key components of this proposal:

Guaranteed Interview: Individuals with the certification will be guaranteed an interview for turfgrass management at Iowa State University. This recognition underscores our commitment to attracting highly qualified professionals who bring valuable expertise in movement assessment and rehabilitation.

Higher Compensation: Because of the expertise and commitment demonstrated by the certified individuals, we propose offering a higher base salary or additional compensation benefits compared to non-certified candidates. This serves as a tangible expression of our commitment to academic excellence and professional development.

I am excited to see where the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will lead these people. With this certification, so many doors can and will be opened. The future of turfgrass science will be elevated through those who choose to earn this certification.

Sincerely,

Adam Thoms, Ph.D.
Iowa State University



Limonta Sport
Via Crema 60
24055 Cologno AI Serio (BG)
Italy

February 26, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

I trust this message finds you well. As an Area Sales Manager for Limonta Sport in Italy, I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the Sports Field Management Association Turfgrass Science Certification (SFMA). In Limonta Sport Italy we are an international company that works with turf grass all over. Recognizing the value that certified professionals bring to the turfgrass science industry, I am excited to announce opportunities for SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification holders within our company.

I understand the critical role that expertise in turfgrass science plays in ensuring the success of sports field projects. I am pleased to extend a guarantee of an interview to individuals who have obtained the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification when applying for positions within our company. Our company is committed to honoring the advanced knowledge and skills demonstrated by SFMA Turfgrass Science Certified individuals by offering a starting salary that reflects their dedication to professional development.

Limonta Sport is committed to hiring highly qualified workers. The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification helps create that candidate. I encourage individuals within our organization and the broader turf community to pursue the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification to elevate their skills and contribute to the success of our recreation program. Thank you for considering endorsing this initiative.

Sincerely,


LIMONTA SPORT SPA
Via Crema, 60
24055 COLOGNO AI SERIO (BG)

Karim Ajam
Area Sales Manager
Karim.ajam@limontasport.com



Mixto Hybrid Grass Technology
20090 Cusago (MI)
Italy

February 26, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dott. Camillo De Beni, and I work at Mixto Hybrid Grass Technology, serving as an agronomist. Mixto Hybrid Grass Technology is an international company that specializes in turf grass fields, focusing on natural grass systems using hybrid technology. Mixto is a company that takes great pride in using turf grass science to create high quality sports fields. Beginning in 1998, the company is leading in synthetic turf production and now in hybrid turf solutions. I am writing this letter in support of the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification. I learned about this credential at the 2024 SFMA Conference, and I couldn't be more excited about it and what it will do to increase the caliber of employees Mixto has access to.

Mixto is committed to hiring not only highly qualified individuals, but those that have a passion for turf grass science. Hence, I am pleased to extend a guarantee of an interview to individuals who have obtained the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. Furthermore, we are committed to recognizing the advanced knowledge and skills demonstrated by SFMA Turfgrass Science certified employees by offering a higher hourly pay that reflects their dedication to professional development and industry education. Individuals who have invested in obtaining this prestigious credential bring a unique level of expertise that aligns seamlessly with our commitment to delivering high-quality solutions to our clients.

It's essential for our employees to have as much knowledge as possible when it comes to not only the basics, but the advanced science of turfgrass. I highly encourage both students and those looking to further their knowledge to achieve this certification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Camillo De Beni". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dott. Camillo De Beni
Agronomist

debeni@mixtosystem.it



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

ERNIE WILLIAMSON ATHLETICS CENTER
450 SKIPPER BOWLES DRIVE (delivery)
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27514

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www.goheels.com
@goheels

PO BOX 2126 (mail)
CHAPEL HILL NC, 27515

06/12/2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Casey Carrick, and I am the Assistant Athletics Director for Facilities and Turf Management at the University of North Carolina. I am writing to you in support of the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification as it relates to the continued success of our institution.

In my role, I assist with day-to-day operations of the athletic facilities, capital projects, renovations, or improvements to UNC facilities. Additionally, I oversee maintenance and renovation projects of 30 acres of athletic turf across the Tar Heel facilities. To be able to efficiently perform these tasks, I need highly qualified workers to work alongside me.

For anyone interested in pursuing a career in parks and recreations, sports management, environmental science, the SFMA Certification offers an opportunity to explore and understand the field better. Additionally, this certification proves mastery of turfgrass science basics and management principles.

Individuals that are equipped with this certification should be guaranteed an interview when applying for positions within our department, and considered for an increased starting pay. Earning the SFMA Certification showcases a proactive approach to skill development and professional readiness, which is valuable across our industry.

I want to hire individuals who have earned the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification because of the knowledge and skills they bring to the table. Across the board, this certification will increase the talent shown through the workforce pipeline.

Sincerely,

Casey Carrick

Assistant Athletics Director for Facilities and Turf Management



Texas A&M Athletics
Houston Street 756
College Station, Texas 77843
June 24, 2024

Howdy!

My name is Nick McKenna and I am the Assistant Athletics Director for Sports Fields with the Texas A&M Athletic Department. My team of skilled professionals and turfgrass science students, work diligently to ensure that our sports fields are maintained properly so that they are safe and can consistently meet the high standards demanded by our coaches, teams, and student athletes. It is based on that premise, that I am writing this letter to express my strong support for the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification.

I am privileged to have had the opportunity to contribute to the certification process by actively participating in the review of the certification exam and curriculum on behalf of SFMA. This involvement has given me valuable insights into the comprehensive and rigorous nature of the certification, ensuring that it aligns seamlessly with the demands of the industry.

In recognition of the SFMA Turfgrass Science certification, I am committed to facilitating interviews with certified professionals for our athletics program and advocating for a starting higher wage to acknowledge the added value and expertise they bring to the table.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification not only serves as a testament to the individual's commitment to their craft but also aligns perfectly with our shared goal of providing top-tier athletic fields & facilities for our student-athletes. I support this certification and believe it will play a pivotal role in advancing the careers of those who have dedicated themselves to the art and science of turfgrass management. I look forward to experiencing the positive impact that the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will undoubtedly have on our industry!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nick McKenna'.

Nick McKenna

Assistant Athletic Director, Sports Fields
nmckenna@athletics.tamu.edu



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF PLANT AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
VIRGINIA TECH.

Virginia Tech
170 Drillfield Drive
411 Price Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061

May 30, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Daniel Sandor, and I am an Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Science at Virginia Tech. We are proud to produce group after group of future turfgrass industry leaders. I am writing to express support for the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification. I was one of the reviewers of the certification and its corresponding preparation materials, so I am familiar with every aspect of what is tested for in the exam.

I am confident that this certification will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the turfgrass industry, and I am proud to be part of the community that recognizes and celebrates the achievements of certified professionals. Together, let us continue to raise the standards of our profession and provide opportunities for growth and success. I look forward to witnessing the positive impact of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification within our organization and beyond.

In acknowledgement of the value that individuals with this certification bring to the field, I will recommend that interviews be guaranteed for SFMA certified professionals who are applying to work on Virginia Tech fields. Moreover, I advocate for higher starting pay for these individuals, accrediting the unique skill set and dedication they possess.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification undoubtedly carries significant weight in building tomorrow's turfgrass industry leaders. This certification will continue to elevate the standards of turfgrass management and contribute to the success of professionals across our industry.

Sincerely,

Daniel Sandor

Daniel Sandor, PhD

Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Science, Virginia Tech
dsandor@vt.edu



Louisiana State University AgCenter

104 J. Norman Efferson Hall

Baton Rouge, LA 70803

November 12, 2024

I am writing in support of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification and its potential approval for its inclusion in Louisiana. As an assistant professor in Turfgrass Management at the Louisiana State University AgCenter, I am acutely aware of the growing need for skilled and knowledgeable entry-level employees in the turfgrass management industry.

Our department regularly hears from industry partners—including golf courses, sports fields, and landscaping companies—who struggle to hire competent entry-level employees. While many candidates possess general interest in the field, they often lack the hands-on experience and technical training necessary for effective turf management. This gap in qualifications is particularly evident in areas such as irrigation management, pest control, and turfgrass maintenance. The SFMA Certification offers an effective solution to this challenge by providing a comprehensive curriculum that emphasizes the technical competencies and best practices essential for success in the turfgrass industry.

I believe that integrating the SFMA certification would not only help bridge this skills gap but also provide individuals with a competitive edge as they transition into the workforce. By endorsing this certification in Louisiana, we can better prepare the next generation of turfgrass professionals to meet the demands of an evolving industry and contribute to the long-term sustainability of turf management practices statewide.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I wholeheartedly support the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in Louisiana and believe it will have a lasting, positive impact on individuals and the industry as a whole.

Sincerely,

Eric DeBoer, PhD

Assistant Professor – Turfgrass Management

School of Plant, Environmental, and Soil Sciences

Louisiana State University AgCenter



January 31, 2025

6552 S US HWY 281
Stephenville, TX 76401
(254) 964-4288

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of the Sports Field Management Association Turfgrass Science Certification. As the owner and operator of Lovell Lawn and Landscapes, with over 20 years of experience in the industry, I am well qualified to speak about the benefits of this certification.

Professionals in the landscaping and groundskeeping field who earn the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification exhibit comprehensive expertise in turfgrass science, management practices, and sustainability. They possess advanced skills in effective turfgrass maintenance, pest control, and soil health management. Individuals that have earned this certification distinguish themselves as exceptional employees, capable of delivering high-quality work that pleases customers.

As an employer, I applaud this certification. When I interview job applicants, knowing an applicant has this certification ensures me they have substantial knowledge and skills related to turfgrass management. 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 SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will lead these people. With this certification, so many doors can and will be opened. The future of turfgrass science will be elevated through those who choose to earn this certification.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arlon Feuerbacher".

Arlon Feuerbacher
Owner and Operator
Lovell Lawn and Landscapes Inc.

SPORTS TURF

CANADA

Sports Turf Canada
346 College Ave East, Unit 2
Guelph, ON N1G 3B9

July 17, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Anne Baliva, and I am the Executive Manager of Sports Turf Canada. Our non-profit organization has been working on sports turf fields and promoting safer sports turf for more than three decades. It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I am writing to express my support for the Sport Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification.

The comprehensive curriculum, industry-aligned standards, and practical training offered by the program ensures that certified individuals are well-equipped to meet the evolving need of sports turf management. Sports Turf Canada is the country's only association dedicated to sports turf management, so it is crucial for us to find competent, qualified individuals to support us in our efforts.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification is going to elevate the playing field for those wishing to enter our industry. The knowledge and skill set these individuals will bring to the table will empower continuous improvement across those in the turfgrass management field. Because of this, individuals equipped with this certification should be guaranteed an interview and considered for a higher starting salary.

By supporting the SFMA Certification, we are collectively fostering a culture of excellence and professional development across our industry. I appreciate the Sports Field Management Association's commitment to this culture as they have developed this certification. I look forward to supporting these certified individuals and am eager to see how they advance our industry.

Sincerely,



Anne Baliva, Executive Manager
Sports Turf Canada



INSTITUTE OF APPLIED AGRICULTURE

3300 Symons Hall, Building 076
College Park, Maryland 20742-2525
301.405.4685 TEL 301.314.9343 FAX
<http://iaa.umd.edu>

February 19, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As a Lecturer and Advisor at the Institute of Applied Agriculture (IAA) at the University of Maryland, I am writing to express my strong support for the approval of the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification in the state of Maryland. This certification is instrumental in equipping individuals with the specialized skills necessary to excel in turfgrass and sports field management careers.

At the IAA, our mission is to provide quality education for future leaders and entrepreneurs in agriculture, turfgrass, horticulture, and natural resource enterprises. A critical component of this mission involves ensuring our graduates possess a comprehensive understanding of turfgrass science, including areas such as turfgrass development, environmental considerations, and maintenance practices, which are essential for maintaining high standards within the industry.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification validates foundational competencies in areas such as turfgrass anatomy, identification, cultural practices, and playing surface preparation. This certification not only enhances the qualifications of entry-level professionals but also provides employers with a reliable benchmark for identifying skilled candidates, thereby addressing the industry's need for knowledgeable and proficient workers.

In conclusion, approving the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in Maryland would significantly benefit both aspiring professionals and employers within the turfgrass and sports field management sectors. It would elevate the standard of expertise among entry-level professionals and support the development of sustainable turfgrass management practices across the state.

Sincerely,

Dane Grossnickle
Lecturer & Advisor
Institute of Applied Agriculture
University of Maryland, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources

Texas A&M University
Soil & Crop Sciences
2474 TAMU
370 Olsen Blvd.
College Station, TX 77843

February 24, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to write this letter in support of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification for approval in the state of Texas. As a Professor of Turfgrass Science at Texas A&M University, I understand the critical need for well-trained professionals in the turfgrass industry. We receive around 4x more job and internship opportunities than we have graduates to fill, and starting salaries have risen considerably over the past 10 years. There are many opportunities, yet too few students aware of or entering our major to accommodate this growing demand. Employers seek individuals with proven knowledge and skills, and industry-recognized certifications help identify those who are prepared to excel in the field.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification serves as a valuable indicator of an individual's commitment to professional growth and industry standards. Because this certification demonstrates a strong foundation in turfgrass management, I consider it an important factor when evaluating potential hires. I would offer an interview to a candidate who holds this certification, as it provides confidence in their preparedness and expertise.

Additionally, I recognize the value of certified individuals in the workplace and would be willing to offer higher compensation to employees who have earned this credential. Approving the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in Texas would directly benefit both job seekers and employers by strengthening the workforce with qualified, knowledgeable professionals. I strongly support its recognition as an industry-valued credential.

Sincerely,



Dr. Benjamin Wherley
Professor of Turfgrass Science
Texas A&M University

Ben G. Wherley
Heep Center, 370 Olsen Boulevard
2474 TAMU
College Station, Texas 77843-2474
b-wherley@tamu.edu

Tel. 979.321.5913
Fax. 979.845.0456
<http://soilcrop.tamu.edu>



COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND LIFE SCIENCES

Department of Soil and Crop Sciences

Texas A&M University
Soil & Crop Sciences
2474 TAMU
370 Olsen Blvd.
College Station, TX 77843

February 26, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to write this letter in support of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification for approval in the state of Texas. As a Research Specialist at Texas A&M AgriLife, I understand the critical need for well-trained professionals in the turfgrass management. There are many opportunities world wide, yet too few students to accommodate this growing demand. Employers seek individuals with proven knowledge and skills, and industry-recognized certifications help identify those who are prepared to excel in the field.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification helps identify individuals who have invested in their professional development and are ready to contribute to the field. Certifications like this are valuable because it indicates a willingness to distinguish oneself from other candidates, giving employers confidence that candidates possess essential industry knowledge. Because of the credibility this certification carries, I would offer an interview to a certified candidate, knowing they have met a recognized standard of excellence.

Approving the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in Texas would strengthen the workforce and provide clear benefits to both job seekers and employers. I fully support its recognition as an industry-valued credential.

Sincerely,

Weston Floyd, CSFM, MCPTM
Research Specialist II
Texas A&M University AgriLife

Weston Floyd
Heep Center, 370 Olsen Boulevard
2474 TAMU
College Station, Texas 77843-2474
w.floyd@tamu.edu

DAVIS

March 3, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

The ability to understand and manage turfgrass health, growth, and sustainability is essential to Texas' landscape and sports turf industries. A skilled workforce ensures the creation and maintenance of high-quality turf environments that enhance both aesthetic and functional value. The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification provides individuals with the critical expertise needed to excel in these areas, and I strongly support its approval in Texas.

At Texas Tech University's Gordon W. Davis College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, we have seen the direct impact of industry-recognized certifications in preparing individuals for success in their careers. Those who earn the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification have demonstrated a deep understanding of turfgrass management, soil science, pest control, and sustainable maintenance practices—skills that are highly valued by employers. I would confidently offer an interview to a certified candidate over one without this credential, as professionals with this expertise are essential to maintaining high-quality turf and landscape operations.

Texas has a thriving landscape and sports turf industry, with an increasing demand for knowledgeable professionals. Approving the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will help ensure a pipeline of qualified individuals ready to meet the growing demands of this industry, contributing to the continued success and sustainability of Texas' landscapes and sports fields.

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 SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. Our organization is responsible for managing water resources, maintaining critical infrastructure, and supporting a variety of landscape and environmental management efforts across the Sabine River Basin. The knowledge and skills gained through this certification, including turfgrass management, soil science, and sustainable landscaping practices, are directly aligned with our need for skilled professionals who can effectively manage the landscapes and green spaces that enhance our infrastructure's functionality and aesthetic value.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification is critical in preparing individuals with the technical expertise and practical experience necessary to manage turfgrass in diverse environments. 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 expertise they bring to our team. Certified employees are an asset to our organization, as they combine both technical proficiency and a deep understanding of turfgrass care, which is essential for the efficient management of our outdoor environments.

By approving the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in Texas, we can better prepare the next generation of turfgrass management professionals, while strengthening organizations like ours that rely on expert landscaping and environmental management to enhance infrastructure and maintain sustainable landscapes. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andrew Balingit'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew Balingit
Chief Dam Safety Engineer
Sabine River Authority of Texas



Horizon Farm Credit
Ellie Grossnickle
(410) 838-5584 egrossnickle@horizonfc.com
1614 E. Churchville Rd., Suite 102. Bel Air, MD 21015

March 4, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to support a multitude of exemplary certifications including; the Southwest Airlines Professional Communications Certification, the Ducks Unlimited Ecology and Management Certification, NCLCA Principles of Livestock Selection and Evaluation Certification, NHJCTA Equine Management and Evaluation Certification and the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. Farm Credit is a network of cooperative lending institutions that provides financial services to farmers, ranchers, and rural communities. Its purpose is to support the agricultural industry by offering loans, credit, and other financial products to help farmers and rural businesses thrive. This includes financing for land, equipment, livestock, and working capital, as well as services like insurance and risk management.

Farm Credit's mission is to ensure that farmers and rural communities have access to reliable, affordable financial resources, especially in times of economic uncertainty. It plays a crucial role in sustaining the agricultural sector, which is vital for the economy and food production. The system is designed to support long-term growth and stability in agriculture, enabling farmers to operate efficiently and meet the demand for food and other agricultural products. These specified certifications would assist farmers, prospective Horizon Farm Credit employees, and all future job candidates in the agriculture industry.

A combination of soft skills and agriculture knowledge is crucial for a successful career in this vital industry. These skills will allow candidates to have exemplary teamwork and leadership skills, adaptability, and innovation throughout their careers. Knowledge demonstrated in these certifications provides the technical expertise required to succeed in the industry, while soft skills demonstrated in the Southwest Communications certification ensure that individuals can work well with others, adapt to change, and navigate the challenges that arise in this dynamic and evolving field. Combining both is essential for building a successful and sustainable career in agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ellie Grossnickle".

Ellie Grossnickle
YBS Relationship Manager Horizon Farm Credit



MARYLAND TURFGRASS COUNCIL

2806 Brewster Rd-Waldorf, MD 20601

www.MDturfCouncil.org

(571) 340-0122

Maryland Turfgrass Council
2806 Brewster Rd
Waldorf, MD 20601
(571) 340-0122

March 4, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Turfgrass Council to support the Sports Field Managers Association's (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification.

The Maryland Turfgrass Council is the umbrella organization for turfgrass professionals in the State of Maryland, focusing on supporting education and professional support. The Maryland Turfgrass Council has several thousand members spread around the state of Maryland in all facets of the turfgrass industry, including but not limited to sports turf management, lawn and landscape professionals, golf course turfgrass management, college and university grounds maintenance, and sod growers.

Turfgrass Management and Sports Turf Management is a large industry which most professionals are not being exposed to the job opportunities and careers offered until college or beyond. It is necessary to get younger students to be aware and educated to help fill the job needs in an industry that is currently short on trained professionals. The SMFA Turfgrass Science certification will allow students to come familiar with a turfgrass, which include topics such as plant science, soil science, entomology, and environmental management.

The Maryland Turfgrass Council works closely with the regional Mid-Atlantic Sports Field Managers Association as both organizations are supporting the professionals in the industry. Currently turfgrass managers at any level are difficult to find. A student who has been through the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification program would be a great benefit to any organization in relating turfgrass management fields.

Thank you for considering our support of the Sports Field Managers Association's Turfgrass Science Certification program. Educated employees are essential to our industry and are needed to keep the industry alive for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Ben Ellis
Maryland Turfgrass Council
Executive Director
Golfturf54@gmail.com



February 21, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the **SFMA Turfgrass Science 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 support responsible land management and sustainable green spaces.

Maryland's agricultural and environmental sectors rely on professionals who understand turfgrass science, soil health, and sustainable management practices. Certifications, like the SFMA certification, provide individuals with a strong foundation in these critical areas, helping to support industries such as sports field management, golf course maintenance, and landscaping. Industry-recognized credentials help employers identify qualified individuals who are prepared to implement best practices that enhance turf health while promoting environmental stewardship.

Approving the **SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification** in Maryland would benefit both individuals seeking to advance their careers and employers looking for knowledgeable professionals in turf management. I strongly support its recognition as a valuable credential within the industry.

Sincerely,

Nicole Nagy
AIR/AFAIR Admin Support

Maryland Department of Agriculture
Nutrient Management Program



We create chemistry

March 10, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. Certifications are invaluable in ensuring individuals stay up-to-date with the latest industry standards and practices. As the turfgrass management industry continues to evolve, it is crucial for professionals to stay informed about the latest techniques, research, and best practices. This certification plays a vital role in ensuring individuals are well-prepared to meet the challenges of modern turfgrass science and management.

BASF is committed to advancing innovation and sustainability across various sectors, including the turfgrass industry. We recognize the importance of professionals who are knowledgeable in turfgrass management and are equipped with the skills to implement effective, environmentally responsible practices. The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification provides individuals with the foundational knowledge necessary to manage turfgrass, improve soil health, and enhance the performance of turf in a sustainable manner.

As a company that prioritizes the development of expertise and sustainability in agriculture and turf management, 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 turfgrass industry as it adapts to new challenges and continues to innovate.

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 turfgrass industry as a whole.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Jones", written over the printed name.

Karissa Jones

Strategic Account Manager

BASF Corporation

Hashtag Internal

#PlantScienceCertificate

Instagram

@basf_agproducts

Twitter

@BASFagro

Facebook & LinkedIn

BASF Agricultural Solutions



The Mill
424 North Main Street
Bel Air, MD 21014

To Whom It May Concern:

The Mill is a family-owned business founded in 1957 with seven locations in Maryland and one in Pennsylvania. Our business has eight departments: Lawn & Turf, Agronomy, Horse, Livestock, Pet, Lawn & Turf, Home & Garden, Wild Bird, and Wildlife. We cater to the needs of local farmers, contractors, and homeowners with seed, fertilizer, chemicals, and custom agronomy application. As a company we are a community partner supporting local organizations, events, schools, and individuals.

Our company is committed to hiring not only highly qualified individuals, but those that have a passion for the industry. By having the Turfgrass Science Certification, we can be assured that in the hiring process the applicant has the knowledge of soil types and properties, growing, drainage, nutrition, and maintenance. Having the most knowledgeable associates provides a better customer experience.

The Mill has always had a commitment to working with local schools and believes Industry Recognized Credentials earned in high school will give students a great knowledge base to be prepared for industry.

Sincerely,

Nathan Holloway
Director of Retail Operations

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nathan Holloway', is written over a horizontal line.

www.themillstores.com

Bel Air | Black Horse | Hampstead | Hereford | Kingstown | Red Lion | Salisbury | Whiteford



February 24, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification and its approval in the state of Maryland. As a Horticulture and Turfgrass Technician with Maryland Parks and Recreation, I see firsthand the critical role that properly trained professionals play in maintaining high-quality turfgrass for public parks, athletic fields, and green spaces. The demand for skilled turfgrass professionals continues to grow, and this certification provides an essential foundation for individuals seeking careers in this industry.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification ensures that individuals have the necessary knowledge in turfgrass management, including soil science, pest control, irrigation, and sustainability practices. These skills directly impact the quality, safety, and longevity of turfgrass in public and private sectors across Maryland. By recognizing this SFMA Certification, at the state level, we can help develop a workforce that is better prepared to meet industry needs while promoting excellence in turf management.

As a person who hires personnel and a past President of the Mid-Atlantic Sports Field Management Association, we value the expertise that the SFMA Certification provides. In fact, I am personally committed to offering an interview preference to job applicants who hold this certification, as it demonstrates their dedication and competency in the field. Furthermore, I am willing to offer higher compensation to employees who have earned this credential, recognizing the added value their expertise brings to our team.

I strongly encourage the state of Maryland to approve the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification as a recognized credential. Doing so will create more opportunities for students and professionals, strengthen the industry, and ensure that our parks, fields, and landscapes continue to be maintained at the highest standards.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Jason Bowers, CSFM

Jason Bowers, CSFM

Horticulture and Turfgrass Technician
Loudoun County Parks and Recreation



March 17, 2025


To Whom It May Concern,

At Red Feather Golf and Social Club, we take great pride in maintaining a world-class playing experience for our members and guests. A well-maintained golf course is essential to achieving this standard, yet it can be difficult to find entry-level employees who already have a strong foundation in turf management. While many new hires are eager to learn, additional training is often required to ensure they understand key aspects such as turf health, irrigation, and pest management, which are crucial for maintaining high-quality playing conditions.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification would be an invaluable step toward closing this skills gap. This certification equips individuals with the fundamental knowledge of turfgrass maintenance, soil science, and drainage—skills that are critical for keeping a golf course in peak condition. Having candidates who are already trained in these areas would significantly reduce onboarding time and allow them to contribute effectively from day one. Because of this, we are willing to offer interviews to certified candidates and provide them with a higher starting wage, as their expertise would immediately benefit our course and maintenance team.

I fully support the approval of this certification in Texas. By preparing students with the essential skills needed in turfgrass management, this program will not only create stronger career pathways but also ensure that golf courses across the state continue to meet the highest standards of excellence.

Sincerely,

 , PGA

Brandon L. Veld, PGA
Director of Golf, Red Feather Golf and Social Club



January 28, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am Jim Darling, Owner of the Austin Territory for Clean Air Lawn Care, a company dedicated to providing sustainable, organic lawn care solutions using electric equipment. We employ a skilled team committed to reducing the environmental impact of traditional lawn care practices, and we serve clients throughout the Austin area.

I am writing to express my full support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. This certification ensures individuals possess the necessary knowledge and skills to manage turfgrass effectively, and it aligns with our values of sustainability and responsible lawn care.

State approval of the SFMA certification would raise the standard for the lawn care industry, ensuring that new hires are better prepared to handle the complexities of turfgrass management. At Clean Air Lawn Care, we often face challenges finding knowledgeable, entry-level employees with the right expertise in turfgrass care. The certification addresses those gaps by providing professionals with the foundation they need to succeed in the field.

We would prioritize hiring candidates with this certification, offering them preferential hiring and potentially higher pay. We believe that having employees with this certification would enhance the quality of service we provide and support our mission of promoting eco-friendly lawn care practices.

We highly encourage state approval for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification, as it is vital to both the growth of our organization and the continued success of the lawn care industry.

Sincerely,

Jim Darling
Owner, Austin Territory
Clean Air Lawn Care



DEPARTMENT OF PLANT & SOIL SCIENCE

TEXAS TECH

Davis College

Davis College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources
Department of Plant & Soil Science
MS 2122
Lubbock, TX 79409-2122

March 12, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Turfgrass management is a robust industry throughout the United States and particularly in Texas. Industry demand is greater than the number of graduating students in turfgrass management, so our job placement is 100% at Texas Tech. With these opportunities, Texas Tech encourages students to enter their turf programs, and the primary limitation is the lack of high school exposure to the industry: students are unaware of the high-quality careers available because they are not exposed to high school turfgrass programs. Teaching turfgrass curriculum in high schools also develops agriculture-adjacent students who care about plant and soil stewardship, but who do not necessarily come from farming or rural backgrounds.

It is imperative that we develop a pipeline of skilled talent for current and future positions within the turfgrass industry through the following actions:

- Raise awareness among high school students, teachers, and counselors of career opportunities in turfgrass science
- Provide teaching curriculum at the high school level, including certificate programs that lead to further training or education
- Develop Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAEs) for high school students to apply turfgrass science knowledge in practical situations

The College Turf Bowl competition recently had 76 universities participate, and the Texas FFA turf contest is in the process of becoming fully sanctioned through the FFA. The availability of resources for aspiring turf students will be invaluable to the turf industry, Texas Tech University, and ultimately students who are interested in turfgrass management. Therefore, we fully support the introduction of turf curricula, including SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification, into high schools in Texas.

Sincerely,

Joseph Young, PhD
Associate Professor of Turfgrass Science

Glen Ritchie, PhD
Chair, Department of Plant & Soil Science



March 21, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is David Burns, and I am the Vice President of Farm Operations at Micks Turf Farm in Crosby, TX. I am writing to express my strong support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification.

At Micks Turf Farm, we are responsible for the production and management of turfgrass for clients such as landscapers, golf courses, and sports fields. One of the challenges we face is the difficulty in hiring entry-level employees with the necessary expertise in turfgrass science, including soil management, irrigation, and sustainable practices.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification addresses this challenge by equipping individuals with the technical skills and practical knowledge needed to manage turfgrass effectively. Certified employees will be well-prepared to handle tasks such as irrigation management, pest control, and implementing sustainable turf practices—critical skills for ensuring both the quality and longevity of turfgrass.

I strongly encourage the approval of this certification in Texas, as it will help fill the skills gap in our workforce and ensure we have qualified professionals ready to meet the growing demand for well-managed turfgrass.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Burns", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

David Burns

Vice President of Farm Operations
Micks Turf Farm



Turfgrass Producers of Maryland

4105 Bennington Pl W Jefferson MD 21755

www.turfproducersofmd.com

Turfgrass Producers of Maryland
4105 Bennington Pl. W
Jefferson MD, 21755
301-377-9183

To whom it may concern:

Turfgrass Producers of Maryland is writing this letter to support the Sports Field Managers Association's (SMFA) Turfgrass Science Certification.

Our organization is comprised of sod growers throughout the state of Maryland. We believe in continued education for young people to further enhance their careers as turf professionals. Our organization works closely with the Sports Field Managers Association. We recognize how important they have been to our state and to our industry. We feel a student who has been through the SMFA Turfgrass Science Certification program would be an asset to sod growers, golf and sports turf managers, parks & recreation managers, university grounds, Maryland State Highway, Maryland Dept of Agriculture, and the list goes on. So many of these mentioned career paths are seeking hard-working young people, with no avail. They are very hard to find. This certification will be a great help to our state and our industry.

Thank you for considering our support of the Sports Field Managers Association's Turfgrass Science Certification program. This program will help young people thrive in turf careers and give them the opportunity to change the landscape all around us.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jason McMillan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jason McMillan
Turf Producers of Maryland
jmcmillan@chesapeakevalleyseed.com
(301)-377-9183



a professional services
firm of certified public
accountants

9816 Slide Road
Suite 301
Lubbock, TX 79424-5781
telephone (806) 744-3333
fax (806) 747-2106
www.rbmsllp.com

Partners:

Rick A. Martin, CPA
John Seright, MSA, CPA/ABV, CVA, CFFA
Carolyn Robinson-Stephenson, CPA
Brent Redford, MSA, CPA, CFE
Matt Heider, MSA, CPA, CVA
Sara Hester, MSA, CPA

March 24, 2025

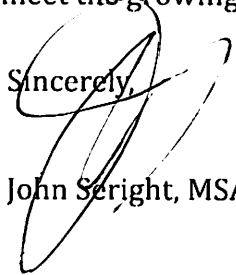
To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to express my strong support for the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in Texas. With over 40 years of experience in accounting, financial management, and business advisory services, I have seen how industry-recognized certifications enhance workforce readiness and create highly skilled professionals. As Managing Partner and CPA of RBMS, LLP in Lubbock, Texas, I recognize the value of specialized training in building expertise and advancing career opportunities. This certification will be instrumental in strengthening the turf grass industry by ensuring individuals are well-prepared to manage and maintain high-quality turf systems.

This certification equips individuals with valuable knowledge in turf grass science, soil management, irrigation systems, and environmental sustainability—skills that are highly relevant in today's evolving industries. At RBMS, LLP, we recognize the value of employees who bring strong analytical, problem-solving, and technical abilities, as these skills directly contribute to our firm's success. We are committed to offering higher salaries and prioritizing interviews for candidates who have earned this certification, as it demonstrates their dedication and readiness to excel.

The approval of this certification will not only benefit individuals pursuing careers in turfgrass science but also contribute to the overall growth of the industry by ensuring a workforce that is well-trained and knowledgeable. By fostering expertise in turf management, this certification will support the sustainability and efficiency of landscaping, sports fields, and other turf-related industries across Texas. I encourage its approval to help meet the growing demand for skilled professionals in this field.

Sincerely,



John Seright, MSA, CPA/ABV, CVA, MAFF



The Rawls Course

March 21, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to support the approval of the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science Certification in Texas. As the Golf Course Superintendent at The Rawls Course at Texas Tech University, I understand the vital role that well-maintained turf plays in providing top tier playing surfaces.

This certification ensures professionals have a strong foundation in turfgrass science, soil management, pest control, and sustainable practices—all critical for managing Texas' unique climate challenges. When hiring, I prioritize candidates with formal credentials that demonstrate their expertise and commitment to high-quality turf management.

At The Rawls Course, properly trained staff are invaluable, helping us tackle challenges like water conservation and extreme temperatures while maintaining exceptional course conditions. Recognizing the value of this certification, we offer competitive salaries and hiring preference to certified individuals.

I strongly support the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in Texas, as it benefits both professionals and the organizations that rely on their expertise.

Sincerely,

Jared Hotchkiss

Golf Course Superintendent

The Rawls Course at Texas Tech University



March 31, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Express Employment Professionals to express our full support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. As the Vice President of Marketing and Communications, I recognize the importance of certifications that provide individuals with the technical expertise necessary for success in specialized fields, and this certification is vital for those pursuing careers in turfgrass management, landscaping, and groundskeeping.

The knowledge gained through this certification equips individuals with essential skills in turfgrass care, maintenance, and sustainability, focusing on topics like soil health, pest management, and water conservation. These skills are critical for maintaining healthy and aesthetically pleasing turfgrass areas, which are essential to the sports, recreation, and landscaping industries.

At Express Employment Professionals, we regularly place candidates in positions requiring expertise in landscaping, turf management, and groundskeeping. We believe that the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will prepare individuals to excel in maintaining turfgrass for a variety of applications, improving the quality and sustainability of landscapes, sports fields, and other turfgrass areas.

We fully support the approval of this certification, recognizing its value in building a skilled workforce for the turfgrass and landscaping industries. This certification will contribute to the continued success of businesses that depend on expertly managed turfgrass and landscaping.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rachel Rudisill".

Rachel Rudisill

Vice President of Marketing and Communications
Express Employment Professionals

STREET FARMS
BARRY STREET
8495 FM 145
KRESS, TX 79052

March 27, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

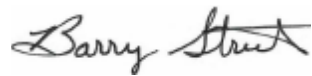
I am writing to express my full support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification and its implementation in Texas. As the owner of Street Farms, I recognize the critical role that turfgrass science plays in soil health, land management, and sustainable agricultural practices. Proper turfgrass management is essential not only for aesthetic and recreational spaces but also for maintaining healthy soils and responsible resource use.

Certified candidates will have the opportunity to earn a higher starting wage at Street Farms. We value 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 SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification, as it signifies a strong foundation in soil management, irrigation efficiency, and environmentally responsible turfgrass maintenance.

The agricultural and land management industries must continuously adapt to challenges such as water conservation, erosion control, and sustainable plant care. Certifications like this ensure that our workforce is well-equipped to implement best practices that promote long-term land health and sustainability. By supporting this certification, we are investing in the future of our industry and fostering a new generation of professionals dedicated to responsible turf and land management.

I strongly recommend the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science 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



SHADOW HILLS GOLF COURSE

6002 3RD STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 98300
LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79499

April 3, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As the General Partner and Owner of Shadow Hills Golf Course in Lubbock, Texas, I am pleased to support the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. Maintaining high-quality turf is essential to the success of golf courses, athletic fields, and many other industries, and this certification provides valuable knowledge in turfgrass management, pest control, irrigation, and soil science. Well-maintained turf is not only visually appealing but also critical to playability, safety, and long-term sustainability.

Finding skilled entry-level employees with a strong understanding of turfgrass science can be a challenge. Proper turf management requires specialized knowledge of plant health, environmental factors, and maintenance techniques to ensure durability and aesthetic quality. The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification helps individuals gain expertise in these areas, making them well-prepared to contribute to operations like ours from day one. Certified individuals bring a higher level of competency, reducing the time needed for on-the-job training and improving overall course conditions.

Because of the value this certification provides, I fully support its approval in Texas. The skills covered in the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification align with the needs of the turf management industry, and I am willing to offer interviews and higher pay to those who earn this certification. Investing in well-trained professionals ensures the long-term health and playability of courses like Shadow Hills, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact this certification will have.

Sincerely,

Thomas Meyer
Shadow Hills Golf Course



Angelo State University

*Office of the Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs*

April 7, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Angelo State University, I am pleased to offer my strong support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification for approval in Texas. In my years of experience in agricultural education, I've come to recognize the growing importance of turfgrass science across multiple industries, including landscaping, sports field management, and environmental conservation. This certification provides individuals with the technical skills necessary to understand turfgrass cultivation, pest management, irrigation, and overall turf care—all essential elements for success in today's rapidly evolving landscape.

The turfgrass industry faces a unique challenge in finding entry-level workers who not only have enthusiasm but also the specific knowledge to maintain and improve the quality of turf. Those who complete this certification have demonstrated they understand the intricacies of turfgrass science, from soil health to maintenance practices, ensuring they're ready to meet the diverse needs of employers in this field. This is exactly the kind of expertise that makes a real difference in maintaining healthy, thriving turf systems for both commercial and residential applications.

At Angelo State, we appreciate individuals who enter the workforce with practical, hands-on knowledge. A certification like this speaks volumes about an individual's preparedness, and we would gladly consider such individuals for interviews and offer them higher pay due to the demonstrated skill set they bring to the table. The readiness these individuals possess ensures they are equipped to contribute immediately and effectively.

Thank you for your time and consideration. The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the future of turfgrass management in Texas and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don R. Topliff".

Don R. Topliff, Ph.D.
Provost/VPAA



April 4, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification and its approval in the state of Texas. As the Assistant Athletic Director of Grounds, Facilities & Events at the University of Houston, I oversee the care and maintenance of athletic fields and facilities used by collegiate athletes at the highest level of competition. Turfgrass knowledge is not just helpful in our line of work—it's essential.

There is a real need for entry-level employees who are ready to contribute from day one. Candidates who have earned the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification demonstrate a baseline level of understanding that is valuable to our operations. In fact, I would gladly offer an interview to someone solely based on their completion of this certification. Additionally, earning this certification would qualify a candidate for a higher starting wage within our department.

It would be great to see the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification approved in Texas, as it would provide students and job seekers with a clear, recognized credential to pursue careers in sports field and turfgrass management. More importantly, it would support organizations like ours in building stronger, more capable teams.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bradley Finn

Assistant Athletic Director of Grounds, Facilities & Events
University of Houston



April 4, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

As President of the Texas Sports Field Managers Association, I am writing to express my strong support for the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in the state of Texas.

Our organization represents professionals across Texas who are responsible for maintaining safe, high-quality sports fields at every level—from high school to professional venues, and your local recreational teams. We consistently hear from our members about the need for better-prepared entry-level candidates who have a foundational understanding of turfgrass management. This certification answers that call.

Approving the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification would not only help meet the demand for skilled labor in our industry, but it would also provide individuals with a direct pathway to a meaningful and rewarding career. It would be a significant step forward for workforce development in the green industry.

As an industry leader, I can confidently say that I would offer an interview to any candidate who has earned this certification, and they would have the opportunity to begin their career at a higher starting wage. It would be great to see this certification approved in Texas, as it would set a new standard for knowledge and professionalism in our field.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Bradley Finn

President

Texas Sports Field Managers Association

Josh Chalfant
Associate Director of Training & Development
EMI
4/4/2025

Ohio Department of Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215



P.O. Box 175
Dublin, Ohio 43017
p 614.876.9988
f 614.876.9986

landscapepros.com

Dear Members of the Ohio Department of Education,

I am writing to express my strong support for the inclusion of the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Turfgrass Science certification as part of the approved curriculum for the state of Ohio. This certification program equips students with essential knowledge and skills in turfgrass management, aligning with the increasing demand for qualified professionals in the field of grounds maintenance.

While sports fields are often associated with professional athletics, they play an equally critical role at the school, park, and community levels. Well-maintained athletic fields are essential for youth sports, recreational activities, and community events that promote physical health, social engagement, and environmental stewardship.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for grounds maintenance workers, including sports turf managers, is projected to grow by 5% between 2023 and 2033, resulting in an estimated 176,600 job openings annually. This anticipated growth highlights the urgent need for educational programs that prepare students for these expanding career opportunities.

At EMI, we have seen firsthand the success of our Sports Turf professionals and Turfgrass Managers who began their careers with a solid foundation in turfgrass management. Certification programs like SFMA's provide students with specialized expertise, enabling them to thrive in their careers while making meaningful contributions to their communities.

By incorporating the SFMA Turfgrass Science certification into Ohio's curriculum, students will gain access to valuable career pathways in a growing industry, while Ohio's schools and recreational facilities will benefit from a well-trained workforce. This initiative will strengthen Ohio's commitment to workforce development, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

I urge you to consider this certification as a critical component of Ohio's educational offerings, ensuring students are equipped with the necessary skills to succeed in this evolving field. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your favorable response.

Sincerely,

Josh Chalfant
Associate Director of Training & Development
EMI

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Josh Chalfant", is written over the printed name and title. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Haney's Mowing & Landscaping, LLC
Mr. Landon Haney
6877 Hollansburg Sampson Rd
Arcanum OH 45304
Cell - 937-750-6233



April 8, 2025

To Whom It May Concern;

I am writing this letter in strong support of the approval and implementation of the **SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification** in Ohio. As the owner and manager of Haney's Mowing & Landscaping, LLC, I have witnessed firsthand the importance of building a knowledgeable, skilled team to ensure the success and growth of our business and of our industry.

I started my business at the age of 14, providing mowing and landscaping services to local residents in Arcanum, Ohio. Over the years, our company has expanded to offer a wide range of services, including mowing, weed control, fertilization, landscape design, aeration, seeding, lawn repair, and athletic field maintenance serving both residential and commercial clients.

The landscape industry continues to evolve, with new techniques, products, and services that require specialized knowledge. Turfgrass science is an essential component of what we do, and providing training and certification in this field would elevate the skills of our workforce, ensuring that lawn care professionals are equipped with the latest industry knowledge.

At Haney's Mowing & Landscaping, LLC, we believe in providing career opportunities for both our team members and also for young professionals. We offer landscaping services to local school athletic fields and support programs like FFA that helped shape my own career. A certification program focused on turfgrass science would be an valuable asset to lawn care and turfgrass professionals, equipping them with both the technical expertise and hands-on experience needed to thrive in the industry.

We support the approval of the **SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification** and encourage you to consider the positive impact it will have on both the quality of lawn care and turfgrass professionals in Ohio and the development of a skilled workforce for years to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Landon Haney
Owner & Manager
Haney's Mowing & Landscaping, LLC



March 30, 2025

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of Huffman, LLC, I am writing to offer our full support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. At Huffman, LLC, we specialize in providing high-quality agronomic services, turf seed, and chemical solutions to a variety of clients within the agriculture and turfgrass industry. We understand the vital role that expertise and training play in maintaining healthy, sustainable turfgrass systems, and we are proud to advocate for certifications like SFMA's Turfgrass Science program.

Our team recognizes the importance of continuing education and professional development for turfgrass managers. The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification program offers a structured and thorough pathway for individuals to enhance their knowledge in turfgrass science, helping to ensure the longevity and quality of turfgrass operations. We strongly believe that those who achieve this certification will be better equipped to meet the challenges of maintaining diverse and sustainable turf environments.

This content would also provide value to our team – ensuring that our staff always operates with a strong understanding and best practices in the forefront.

Our work with agronomists, farmers, turf managers, and other professionals emphasizes the value of advanced training and certification in creating a more sustainable and effective approach to turf management.

In conclusion, Huffman, LLC fully supports the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification and encourages those in the turfgrass management field to pursue this valuable credential. We look forward to seeing the continued growth of the program and its positive effects on the industry.

Should you require any further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Brad Collins
Sales and Agronomy Specialist
Huffman, LLC



1201 Dublin Rd, Suite 136 • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • 614.285.4683

April 3, 2025

To Whom it may concern:

The Ohio Sports Field Management Association has been a chapter of the National Sports Field Management Association since the late 1990's. During this time, OSFMA has been a strong supporter of the Sports Field Management industry in Ohio by promoting Advocacy, Awareness, Education, Research, Networking, Outreach and Career Development. It is our goal to ensure safe and playable Athletic Surfaces across Ohio from Community-based fields to the athletic surfaces the professional athletes play on each week. OSFMA represents the hard-working Grounds Teams, Turf Industry Sales Professionals, Research Scientists, Educators and Students

One of the challenges our industry faces here in Ohio is finding qualified professionals interested in making the Sport Field Management industry a career. We believe this begins in the education system here in Ohio with awareness and opportunities to gain the basic knowledge and experience needed to start a successful career. With the turf industry accounting for more than \$4.6 billion of the Ohio economy and more than 40,000 individuals employed in the state, we feel this industry is a future to invest in.

This investment should begin with the educational opportunities offered by our Ohio Schools. An Educational Certificate focusing on Turfgrass Sciences, Soil Sciences, Grounds and Turf Management would prepare the students for immediate employment after completion or advance the students into a Post Secondary Institution in which Ohio has one of the top-rated Turfgrass Management programs in the nation.

The Ohio Sports Field Management Associate is in complete support of a Certificate program directly focusing on the Turf Management industry.

Regards

Brian T. Hall

Brian Hall

bhall@playsylvania.com

Ohio Sports Field Management Council- President



March 30, 2025

Hello,

My name is Malik McCorkle, and I am the VP of Maintenance at Vonderhaar Farms, INC, located in Camden, Ohio, in Preble County. I am writing to express my support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification to be approved in Ohio.

At Vonderhaar Farms, in addition to our grain crop production, a critical part of our operation is maintaining the quality and health of both our grounds and tillable land, including installation of drainage tile to increase soil health and improve yields. Many of the skills and knowledge covered in this certification are transferable and add value to our day-to-day operation. We are in support of this credential, knowing the content included would benefit both our year-round employees and seasonal team members.

Our team regularly employs seasonal workers who assist with tasks that vary from: mowing, lawn aeration, assisting with soil health management, and support with planning and installing of systematic drainage tile. The practical application of this certification would provide value to our farm by empowering our seasonal team members to take on tasks with confidence and understanding, as well as ensuring our full team is operating with industry best practices in mind.

The knowledge gained from the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification would enable them to contribute more effectively to the success of our grounds maintenance and farm operations, leading to higher efficiency and productivity throughout the year.

Thank you for your consideration of this certification. I believe the approval of this certification would be an asset to Ohio's farming community. We look forward to seeing how this can benefit our team at Vonderhaar Farms and also enhance the skills of workers in the industry at large.

Thank you,

Malik McCorkle

Malik McCorkle
VP of Maintenance
Vonderhaar Farms, INC





April 8, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

As a Landscape Designer at All Seasons Property Care, I'm excited to share my support for the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in the state of Texas. In our line of work, turf management is a major part of maintaining healthy, attractive properties—whether it's residential lawns, commercial spaces, or athletic fields. This certification offers a strong foundation in turfgrass varieties, soil health, irrigation, pest control, and maintenance practices, all of which are essential for producing great results in our industry.

A challenge we sometimes face when hiring is finding individuals who truly understand what it takes to establish and care for quality turf. Many applicants have a general interest in landscaping but lack the technical know-how to identify turf issues or implement sustainable solutions. The SMFA Turfgrass Science Certification addresses that by preparing individuals with the kind of specialized knowledge we often don't see in entry-level hires. That kind of head start makes a real impact on job performance and team efficiency.

We recognize and value the commitment it takes to complete a certification like this, and we're more than willing to offer interviews and higher pay to individuals who bring that expertise to the table. The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification helps create a more skilled and confident workforce, and I believe it would be a great asset not only to our company but to the landscaping and groundskeeping industry across Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry McNeill", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Terry McNeill
All Seasons Property Care

Scott Mabis
CLT/OCLT/ICPI
SRWI Certified

3320 Stahlheber Rd.
Hamilton, OH 45013

Phone: 513-334-9731 Scott
Phone: 513-479-0896 Troy

mabislandscapeconst@gmail.com

Troy Mabis
ICPI/AB Wall
Certified Licensed
Applicator

Mabis Landscape Construction LLC.

March 30, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am Troy Mabis, the owner of Mabis Landscape Construction, LLC, based in western Ohio. For years, my company has been dedicated to providing quality landscaping and grounds maintenance services to clients across the region.

I am writing to express my strong support for the ***SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification*** to be approved in our state.

In my line of work, I've seen firsthand how the right knowledge, experience, and expertise make a significant difference. I place a high value on hiring employees who can deliver top-quality work and contribute positively to our reputation. Individuals who earn this certification would prove to have the knowledge and a deep understanding of turfgrass science, maintenance practices, nutrient management, drainage, soil health and management, and environmental benefits.

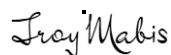
At Mabis Landscape Construction, we hire a small but skilled team to handle our grounds maintenance and landscaping projects. Our work requires precision and expertise, and this certification would provide any new team members with a solid foundation in turfgrass care and directly enhance the quality of service we provide to our clients.

I believe that the ***SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification*** will elevate the standard of the landscaping industry as a whole by ensuring that employees are better prepared to manage the complexities of turfgrass and grounds care.

I fully support the approval of this certification in Ohio. I believe it would help raise the bar for turfgrass professionals and benefit companies like ours in the long run, which depend on knowledgeable and reliable workers. I am excited to see how this certification will shape the future of my industry and improve the quality of landscaping and grounds maintenance in our state.

I look forward to seeing the positive impact this certification will have. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Troy Mabis
Owner, Mabis Landscape Construction, LLC

Preston Gregoire
Medina Turf Farms
8689 Lake Road
Seville, Ohio
Preston@medinaturf.com
330-807-6741

Ohio Department of Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Subject: Letter of Support for the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification

Dear Members of the Ohio Department of Education,

I am writing to express my **strong support** for the proposed **SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification** to be integrated into Ohio's educational and workforce training programs. As the turfgrass industry evolves, there is an increasing need for **science-based education** in **turfgrass management, soil science, seed technology, sod production, and sustainable landscape practices**. This certification will **equip students, professionals, and homeowners** with the knowledge needed to **properly care for and sustain healthy, environmentally friendly landscapes** while supporting a **growing industry with vast career opportunities**.

The Shift Towards 0.00% Crop & Weed Seed and A-List Sustainability

The turfgrass industry is shifting toward **higher purity seed standards** by embracing **0.00% crop and weed seed** blends. This movement is **reducing the need for chemical herbicides, promoting superior turf quality, and protecting native plant ecosystems**. Additionally, **A-List Certified turfgrasses** provide **drought resistance, lower input requirements, and increased durability**, making them a sustainable and cost-effective choice for homeowners and professionals alike.

Sod: The Best Natural Erosion Control Solution

Sod is one of the **most effective natural erosion control methods**, immediately stabilizing soil, improving water absorption, and increasing carbon sequestration. Compared to traditional erosion control blankets or synthetic barriers, sod provides **instant green coverage** and **long-term soil health benefits**. Educating students and professionals about **sod's role in preventing erosion** will enhance **Ohio's urban landscapes, sports fields, highway systems, and residential developments**.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to discuss further how this certification will benefit **Ohio's education system, workforce, and environmental sustainability efforts.**

Sincerely,

Preston Yegorin



April 9, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Please consider the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification as an educational resource across the state of Ohio.

Benchmark Landscape Construction has been serving Central Ohio for nearly 30 years. We understand that the success of our organization lies in the quality and expertise of our field staff. Our team is the backbone of everything we design, build, and maintain, and we are committed to ensuring they are well-trained and knowledgeable in providing exceptional craftsmanship.

We believe that the inclusion of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification in educational and training programs would provide valuable skills for those entering the landscape and turf management industries. This certification aligns with industry standards and equips individuals with practical, hands-on knowledge that directly contributes to their success in the field.

Benchmark Landscape Construction has long been a strong supporter of career education. We actively participate in and support Career-Technical Education career events, host tours of our facilities for students, and offer hands-on learning opportunities. Our company believes in nurturing the next generation of professionals in the landscape industry, and we see the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification as another opportunity to achieve this goal.

The integration of this certification into Ohio's educational programs will not only provide students with a competitive edge but also enhance the overall quality of the workforce in our state.

The team at Benchmark Landscape Construction, Inc. is confident that this certification will provide significant value to both learners and the industry as a whole.

Thank you for considering this important step in supporting the growth of a highly skilled workforce in Ohio's landscape and turf management industry.

Respectfully Submitted,

Devon Stanley, OCNT/LIC
Maintenance Division Manager
Maintenance Business Developer
B.S. Landscape Horticulture – The Ohio State University
(614) 206-1846 mobile / dstanley@benchmarkohio.com



Ramzi White
Senior Branch Manager
Mobile: 806-589-8308
Email: Rwhite@siteone.com

April 11, 2025

To Whom It May Concern

As a Senior Branch Manager of SiteOne Landscape Supply, I am pleased to express my support for the approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification. At SiteOne, we pride ourselves on being the largest and only national wholesale distributor of landscape supplies in the United States, serving a diverse clientele of residential and commercial landscape professionals who specialize in the design, installation, and maintenance of lawns, gardens, golf courses, and other outdoor spaces.

At SiteOne, we are consistently impressed by individuals who come prepared with a solid foundation in turfgrass science and related disciplines. While we welcome candidates from various backgrounds, those with specialized knowledge in turf management, irrigation systems, and landscape maintenance often adapt more quickly and contribute meaningfully from the outset. Their preparedness not only enhances our team's efficiency but also elevates the service we provide to our clients.

The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification offers a structured and comprehensive curriculum that aligns with the competencies we value at SiteOne. By equipping individuals with in-depth knowledge and practical skills pertinent to turfgrass science, this certification ensures that candidates are well-prepared to meet the demands of our industry. Recognizing the value of such credentials, we are committed to offering enhanced compensation to certified individuals and prioritizing them in our hiring process.

The approval of the SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification will undoubtedly elevate the standard of professionals entering the landscape supply industry. We are enthusiastic about the positive impact this will have on our workforce and the broader community.

Sincerely,

Ramzi White
SiteOne Landscape Supply