



SFI Tick of Approval/Certification

1.1 The Soil Foodweb Tick of Approval Program

Soil Foodweb International New Zealand (SFI NZ) is a globally renowned and respected organisation with over 20 years of research in the areas of soil biology, compost and compost teas and their application in sustainable agricultural practices.

This program defines a level of quality based upon leading scientific research into soil function that is superior to standing conventional regulations governing agricultural inputs and their management. The program enables agronomists, consultants and manufacturers to gain an understanding and achieve a level of competence in proven SFI NZ practices designed to build and maintain a healthy soil food web. Subject to meeting the ongoing requirements of this program, participants will achieve SFI accreditation. This accreditation will allow the business entity to carry the 'Soil Foodweb Tick of Approval' on their products and marketing materials. Appropriately qualified participants will also be listed on the SFI website, becoming eligible for nomination as an "SFI Accredited Advisor" or "SFI Senior Agronomist" by Soil Foodweb International as projects arise.

1.2 Benefits of Certification -

- SFI NZ offers specific scientific and technical support second to none to its certified affiliates that are based upon the knowledge gained from its extensive data set in New Zealand and other countries around the globe.
- SFI NZ can generate business opportunities for participants via its website, seminars, and by promoting accredited businesses to their client base.
- SFI NZ's Grower Program is strictly conditional upon growers using only SFI NZ Approved Inputs.
- SFI NZ's Grower Program is rapidly gaining acceptance as the benchmark for many prominent and discerning growers upon which they base their future business decisions.
- SFI NZ logo is allowed to be used by the certified business to promote their service or product subject to certain conditions and will be granted access to some agreed SFI NZ marketing materials if desired.
- SFI NZ Certified entities will receive at cost a full page in the appropriate section of the SFI NZ website which can incorporate links to their own website should they choose.
- SFI NZ provides professional introductory and update training that will lead to and maintain ongoing certification.
- SFI NZ will keep accredited and affiliated companies informed of events and developments via regular newsletters.



1.3 Who the Tick of Approval Program Applies to?

- Suppliers and Manufacturers of products: Compost, compost tea, compost tea brewers & extractors, soil biological food and other similar beneficial products.
- SFI NZ Accredited Advisors & SFI NZ Senior Agronomists prepared to work to the guidelines of sustainable growing as outlined in SFI NZ principles

1.4 Scope -

The SFI NZ Tick of Approval covers:

- Who is eligible to participate and how the ongoing qualification is maintained
- How long it takes to qualify and how often renewal is required
- Training or product analysis covered in the process
- SFI NZ quality standard outcomes required by persons or products to obtain and maintain competence and progress in SFI NZ methods
- The specific areas that will be assessed and how the assessment takes place

1.5 How to use the SFI NZ Tick of Approval -

The SFI NZ Tick of Approval will allow a business entity to diversify its product or service offerings they can offer to their existing and potential clients coupled with the reassurance that these services are delivered by an accredited company who adheres to the SFI NZ code of practice.

How to enroll in the program:

1. Contact SFI NZ at PO Box 40, Roxburgh, 9441
2. Initial interview about composting site and needs.
3. Contract reviewed and signed.

2 SFI's Tick of Approval Standards & Obligations for Products -

The purpose of Soil Foodweb International New Zealand's (SFI NZ's) Tick of Approval Program for products is to direct purchasers to reliable and consistently good quality sources of compost, compost teas, compost extracts, compost tea brewers and extractors and other suitably sustainable agricultural products. Products that pass SFI NZ's rigorous standards are displayed on our website along with contact details of the suppliers. Approved products are also recommended to clients via email and telephone enquiries to the Soil Foodweb International New Zealand Laboratory.



2.1 COMPOST -

To gain the SFI NZ Tick of Approval, compost suppliers must meet SFI NZ's criteria for Compost Organism standards, Compost Production Standards and Client Obligations as listed below. All microbial measurements are performed on fresh, un-dried compost, and expressed on a per dry weight basis. Therefore, gravimetric dry weight of compost samples must be determined.

2.1.1 *Compost Organism Standards -*

The minimum desired levels of organisms, and the balance of organisms, as determined by direct microscopy, in compost (vermicompost, thermal, or static) to gain SFI NZ's Tick of Approval are:

- Ratio of the biomass of active bacteria to active fungi should be close to one (0.75 to 1.25).
- Ratio of total fungi to total bacteria should be close to one (0.75 to 1,25).
10 µg to 30 µg or more active bacterial biomass/g dry weight of compost
150 µg to 1,000 µg or more total bacterial biomass/g dry weight of compost
- A minimum of 6 morphological types of bacteria per 1000 bacteria viewed.
- 10 µg to 30 µg or more active fungal biomass/g dry weight of compost
150 µg (bacterial compost) to 1,000 µg or more (fungal compost) total fungal biomass/g dry weight of compost
- A minimum of 6 morphological types of fungi per 20 strands of fungal hyphae viewed.

Hyphal diameters should on average be 2.5 µm or greater

25,000 or more protozoa/g dry weight of compost, distributed in the following groups:

10,000 to 15,000 or more flagellates
10,000 to 15,000 or more amoebae
50 – 100 ciliates
- A minimum of 6 morphological types of flagellates and amoebae per 20 protozoa viewed.
- **10 to 100 BENEFICIAL nematodes/g dry weight of compost, distributed in the following groups:
6 – 10 bacterial-feeders
5 – 10 fungal-feeders
1 – 5 predatory nematodes[†]
No root-feeding nematodes
- **A minimum of 6 morphological types of bacterial-feeding nematodes/gram dry weight of compost
- **A minimum of 6 morphological types of fungal-feeding nematodes/gram dry weight of compost



2.1.2 Compost Sold in Sealed Containers -

- Less than 10% activity of bacterial and fungal biomass

2.1.3 Compost for Different Plant Groups

- Early successional plants species , such as brassica, composites, riparian and wetland plants require strongly bacterial-dominated soils. Therefore, the ratio of fungi to bacteria in composts used for this plant group could be allowed to have greater bacterial-biomass than fungal.
- Mid-successional plant species, such as vegetables, annual flowering plants, and row crops, require equal biomass of fungi to bacteria.
- Late successional plant species, such as trees and shrubs, require strongly fungal-dominated soils.

Therefore the ratio of fungi to bacteria in compost used for this group could be allowed to have greater fungal biomass than bacterial.

Equally balanced compost can be modified for bacterial or fungal dominance by adding bacterial or fungal foods, respectively. Bacterial foods are simple sugars, structurally non-complex proteins and carbohydrates. Fungal foods are higher molecular weight materials such as humic acid, lignin, cellulose and complex proteins.

2.1.4 Compost Production Standards

Compost must be produced under the following conditions and possess the characteristics listed (where applicable) to gain SFI NZ's Tick of approval. Compost production using thermal approaches versus worm activity require different standards, as outlined below:

Thermal compost

- A mixture of low C:N plant materials (legumes and manures), mid-C:N plant materials (hay, green leaves, kitchen waste) and high C:N plant materials (paper, sawdust, wood chips) must be used. At least 10 different kinds of plant materials must be used to encourage microbial diversity.
- Temperature of 55° C (131° F) or higher in all parts of the compost, but not above 70° C (158°F) for at least 3 days. The outside of the pile will not be at temperature until turning occurs which moves the outside material into the middle of the pile. Temperature data must accompany any samples tested for biology.
- Piles must be turned to equally distribute microorganisms through the pile and to achieve a uniform distribution of the different plant materials added into pile. In addition, piles should be turned each time temperature reaches between 65 C (150 F) and 70 C (158 F), in order to return oxygen to the pile.
- Maintain 6.0 ppm O₂ (dissolved gasses) or higher during compost cycle



- Moisture range of 45% – 55% during the whole process. Drying can be allowed if the material is to be shipped or stored through the cold/dry season. Compost must be wetted up a week before use, and the biology assessed after wetting.
- Pleasant earthy smell with no hint of anaerobic acids (vinegar, soul milk, vomit) or volatile gases (ammonia, rotten eggs) at any time during or after the composting process.

Vermi-compost (worm compost):

- One hundred worms per top three inches, in a six inch by six inch area, one day after adding fresh organic matter, and that organic matter must be completely processed by the worms in a 3 day period, is required to produce proper worm compost.
- The feed mixture for the worms should consist of 50% mid-C:N material and 50% wide C:N material. These mixtures of “green” and “woody” can be thermally treated manure, or a mix of woody materials and manure.
- Temperature should remain at ambient.
- Material is turned by the worms.
- Maintain 6.0 ppm O₂ (dissolved gasses) or higher during compost cycle
- Moisture range of 55% – 70% during the whole process
- Pleasant earthy smell with no hint of anaerobic acids (vinegar, soul milk, vomit) or volatile gases (ammonia, rotten eggs) at any time during or after the composting process.
- The worm bed should be at least 18 inches deep, with worms concentrated in the top 3 to 6 inches.

Note: Worm compost can be done batch or flow-through.

2.1.5 Client Obligations

Compost that does not heat following a mixing event is the desired material for assessing whether the compost is finished. Once this is determined, sampling and testing should be performed:

1. Many small samples should be taken from each compost pile within a batch, where all starting materials were the same. Compost should be finished, as defined by microbial activity below 10%, and temperature at ambient even after turning. Each 3 meters long the pile, a 200 ml (half cup) of compost from an arm’s length into the pile (2 ft), should be taken, and once all are collected from that pile, mixed with all other samples from that batch. A sample of 250 ml of that mix should be sent to the lab for Total Foodweb assessment.
2. Daily measurements of the temperature, moisture and turning through the composting process will be submitted with the compost samples.
3. The starting materials used in the pile, pile size and how the pile was put together will be reported.
4. If the piles have been stored, storage conditions, and any other variables that may affect the quality of the compost as received by the purchaser, must be included.



5. Each sample will be assessed for the Total Foodweb (Active and Total Bacteria, Active and Total Fungi, Protozoa and Nematodes) as well as numbers of *E. coli*.
6. A total of three samples will be sent for testing. Preferably, three consecutive batches, or three different initial mixes of starting material will be sent.
7. The client will receive a written description detailing what was present in the compost and whether the compost met the standards of quality.
8. Each sample must meet minimum recommendations for quality compost. If standards are not met, we can work with you to help correct any process problems.
9. When the three samples meet minimum recommendations, your business information will be listed in SFI NZ's 'Tick of Approval' program on the SFI NZ website. Your listing will include your business name and contact information, your designated name(s) of the compost(s) that have passed the quality compost testing and results of the testing.
10. Compost made at the compost facility that passed the quality testing can advertise that it passed SFI NZ's 'Tick of Approval' for quality compost. SFI NZ can assist in writing how your compost meets the requirements for quality compost.
11. To maintain the listing on SFI NZ's website –
 - a. Every batch of compost made needs qualitative assessment. The client can learn to perform qualitative testing or samples can be sent to the lab. If the client performs the qualitative assessment, the data must be sent to the lab within hours of being taken.
 - b. Once every three months, a Total Foodweb assessment from a selected compost batch will be performed.
 - c. Written descriptions will be sent to the client of all data.
12. If standards continue to be met, your compost data will remain on the list and test data will be updated with each subsequent sample. Again, if standards are not met, we will work with you to correct any problems.
13. Delinquency -
 - a. SFI- NZ will send reminders that samples of each batch and that three month samples must be taken.
 - b. If samples are not submitted in a timely fashion, your details will be removed from the SFI NZ website and you will remove our seal and "Tick of Approval" from all your marketing materials. Non-compliance may result in legal action being undertaken.

2.2 COMPOST TEA and COMPOST EXTRACT

To gain SFI NZ's Tick of Approval compost tea and compost extract suppliers must meet SFI's criteria of Compost Tea/Extract Organism Standards, Compost Tea/Extract Production Standards and Client Obligations as listed below.

All microbial measurements for compost tea/extract are performed on fresh liquid samples. Results are expressed per ml of compost tea or extract.



2.2.1 Compost Tea Standards

The minimum desired levels of organisms, and the balance of organisms, as determined by direct microscopy, in compost tea to gain SFI NZ's Tick of Approval are:

- Ratio of the biomass of active bacteria to active fungi should be close to one (0.75 to 1.25).
- Ratio of total fungi to total bacteria should be close to one (0.75 to 1.25).
10 µg to 150 µg or more active bacterial biomass/ml compost tea
50 µg to 3,000 µg or more total bacterial biomass/ml compost tea
- A minimum of 6 morphological types of bacteria per 1000 bacteria viewed.
10 µg to 150 µg or more active fungal biomass/ml compost tea
50 µg to 3,000 µg or more total fungal biomass/ml of compost tea
- A minimum of 6 morphological types of fungi per 20 strands viewed.

Hyphal diameters should on average be 2.5 µm or greater

1,0000 or more protozoa/ml of compost tea, distributed in the following groups:

1,000 or more flagellates

100 or more amoebae

10 ciliates

- A minimum of 6 morphological types of flagellates and amoebae per 20 protozoa viewed
- **1 to 10 BENEFICIAL nematodes/ml of compost tea, distributed in the following groups:
1 – 5 bacterial-feeders
Up to 5 fungal-feeders
No root-feeding nematodes
- **A minimum of 6 morphological types of bacterial-feeding nematodes/ml of compost tea
- **A minimum of 6 morphological types of fungal-feeding nematodes/ml of compost tea

2.2.2 Compost Extract Standards

The minimum desired levels of organisms, and the balance of organisms, as determined by direct microscopy, in compost extract to gain SFI NZ's Tick of Approval are:

- Ratio of the biomass of active bacteria to active fungi should be close to one (0.75 to 1.25).
- Ratio of total fungi to total bacteria should be close to one (0.75 to 1,25).
0 µg to 150 µg or more active bacterial biomass/ml compost tea
50 µg to 3,000 µg or more total bacterial biomass/ml compost tea
- A minimum of 6 morphological types of bacteria per 1000 bacteria viewed.
0 µg to 150 µg or more active fungal biomass/ml compost tea
50 µg to 3,000 µg or more total fungal biomass/ml of compost tea
- A minimum of 6 morphological types of fungi per 20 strands viewed.

Hyphal diameters should on average be 2.5 µm or greater



10 to 100 or more protozoa/ml of compost tea, distributed in the following groups:
100 or more flagellates
0 to 10 or more amoebae
0 - 2 ciliates

- A minimum of 6 morphological types of flagellates and amoebae per 20 protozoa viewed
- **0 to 10 BENEFICIAL nematodes/ml of compost tea, distributed in the following groups:
 - **0 – 5 bacterial-feeders
 - **Up to 5 fungal-feeders
 - **No root-feeding nematodes

2.2.3 Compost Tea Production Standards

Compost tea must be produced under the following conditions and possess the characteristics listed (where applicable) at completion to gain SFI NZ's Tick of approval:

- Compost used to make tea must meet SFI NZ Tick of Approval
- Maintain 6.0 ppm O₂ per L or higher from beginning of brewing until application
- No ammonia, rotten egg, vinegar, sour milk or vomit smells at any time
- No dark brown to black biofilm build-up; cleaning is critical between batches
- Keep internal surfaces to absolute minimum in the brewer
- Compost in bag must remain aerobic through the whole brewing process

Compost amounts used in the brewing process must be kept to a minimum; addition of bacterial or fungal growth substrates must be kept to a minimum in order to maintain oxygen concentrations at aerobic levels.

Finished compost tea is defined by net zero growth in the organisms in the tea brew. Activity should be <10%, increases in bacterial and fungal biomass should be balanced by protozoa and nematodes consumption.

2.2.4 Client Obligations

1. Initial tea brews should be monitored for increases in bacterial and fungal biomass. Increases should occur in the first 15 to 35 hours, depending on temperatures, but should then level off.
2. Compost tea should be sampled by removing 1 to 5 ml (2 to 3 teaspoons) from the tea as the tank is emptied. The tea should be actively aerated through the whole emptying process. The samples should be combined from the whole tea, and sent into the lab in containers that are no more than 1/3 full.
3. A picture of the inside of the tank should be taken and transmitted to SFI NZ immediately after the tank is cleaned preferably with date stamp for authentication or signed statement to that effect.
4. Measurements of the temperature through the brew cycle should be submitted with the compost tea samples.
5. The starting materials used in the tea should be reported.



6. Each sample will be assessed for the Total Foodweb (Active and Total Bacteria, Active and Total Fungi, Protozoa and Nematodes) as well as numbers of *E. coli*.
7. A total of three samples will be sent for testing. Preferably, three consecutive batches, or three different initial mixes of starting material will be sent.
8. The client will receive a written description detailing what was present in the compost tea and whether the compost tea met the standards of quality.
9. Each sample must meet minimum recommendations for quality compost tea. If standards are not met, we can work with you to help correct any process problems. Additional information may be required if teas are not meeting standards, such as source and type of water, brewer type, source and type of compost, brew cycle and cleaning methods, etc.
10. When the three samples meet minimum recommendations, your business information will be listed in SFI NZ's 'Tick of Approval' program on the SFI NZ website. Your listing will include your business name and contact information, your designated name(s) of the compost(s) teas that have passed the quality compost tea testing and results of the testing.
11. Compost tea made at the compost tea facility that passed the quality testing can advertise that it passed SFI NZ's 'Tick of Approval' for quality compost tea. SFI NZ can assist in writing how your compost tea meets the requirements for quality compost tea.
12. To maintain the listing on SFI NZ's website,
 - a. Every batch of compost tea made needs qualitative assessment. The client can learn to perform qualitative testing or samples can be sent to the lab. If the client performs the qualitative assessment, the data must be sent to the lab within hours of being taken.
 - b. Once every three months, a Total Foodweb assessment from a selected compost tea batch will be performed.
 - c. Written descriptions will be sent to the client of all data.
13. If standards continue to be met, your compost tea data will remain on the list and test data will be updated with each subsequent sample. Again, if standards are not met, we will work with you to correct any problems.

2.2.5 Delinquency

SFI NZ will send reminders that samples of each batch and that three month samples must be taken.

If samples are not submitted in a timely fashion, your details will be removed from the SFI NZ website and you will remove our seal and "Tick of Approval" from all your marketing materials. Non-compliance may result in legal action being undertaken.

2.2.6 Compost Extract Production Standards

Compost extract must be produced under the following conditions and possess the characteristics listed (where applicable) at completion to gain SFI NZ's Tick of approval:

- Compost used to make extract must meet SFI NZ Tick of Approval
- Water is used to extract the organisms and soluble materials from the compost. Water pressure must be similar to water movement in a tea brewer to allow for extraction.



- The extract must maintain 6.0 micrograms O₂ per L or higher from beginning of extraction application
- No ammonia, rotten egg, vinegar, sour milk or vomit smells at any time
- No dark brown to black biofilm build-up; cleaning is critical between batches
- Keep internal surfaces to absolute minimum in the brewer
- Compost in bag must remain aerobic through the whole extracting process

Compost amounts used in the extracting process are typically 10 times what is used in a compost tea brewing process. Addition of bacterial or fungal growth substrates is not allowed during extract production. No growth of organisms is expected during the extract production process. Whatever activity was present in the compost will still be present in the extract. If mature compost is used, there will be little to no activity in the extract. If compost used is activated before extraction, then activity can be quite high.

Extracts the greater concern is keeping organisms in low activity conditions to minimize growth and thus concern for aeration.

2.2.7 Client Obligations

1. Compost extract should be sampled by removing 1 to 5 ml (2 to 3 teaspoons) from the extract as the extract is produced. The samples should be combined from the whole extract and sent into the lab in containers that are no more than 1/3 full.
2. A picture of the inside of the extractor should be taken and transmitted to SFI immediately after the unit is cleaned preferably with date stamp for authentication or signed statement to that effect.
3. Each sample will be assessed for the Total Foodweb (Active and Total Bacteria, Active and Total Fungi, Protozoa and ****Nematodes**) as well as numbers of *E. coli*.
4. A total of three samples will be sent for testing. Preferably, three consecutive batches, or three different initial mixes of starting material will be sent.
5. The client will receive a written description detailing what was present in the compost tea and whether the compost tea met the standards of quality.
6. Each sample must meet minimum recommendations for quality compost extract. If standards are not met, we can work with you to help correct any process problems. Additional information may be required if teas are not meeting standards, such as source and type of water, brewer type, source and type of compost, brew cycle and cleaning methods, etc.
7. When the three samples meet minimum recommendations, your business information will be listed in SFI's 'Tick of Approval' program on the SFI website. Your listing will include your business name and contact information, your designated name(s) of the compost(s) extracts that have passed the quality compost tea testing and results of the testing.
8. Compost extract made at the compost extract facility that passed the quality testing can advertise that it passed SFI NZ's 'Tick of Approval' for quality compost extract. SFI can assist in writing how your compost extract meets the requirements for quality compost extract.
9. To maintain the listing on SFI NZ's website,



- a. Every batch of compost extract made needs qualitative assessment. The client can learn to perform qualitative testing or samples can be sent to the lab. If the client performs the qualitative assessment, the data must be sent to the lab within hours of being taken
 - b. Once every three months, a Total Foodweb assessment from a selected compost tea batch will be performed.
 - c. Written descriptions will be sent to the client of all data.
10. If standards continue to be met, your compost tea data will remain on the list and test data will be updated with each subsequent sample. Again, if standards are not met, we will work with you to correct any problems.

2.2.8 Delinquency

SFI NZ will send reminders that samples of each batch and that three month samples must be taken.

If samples are not submitted in a timely fashion, your details will be removed from the SFI NZ website and you will remove our seal and "Tick of Approval" from all your marketing materials. Non-compliance may result in legal action being undertaken.

2.3 Other Products

Products & equipment including additives for compost, soil, compost tea or compost extracts, or equipment for making compost, tea or extracts, can gain SFI NZ's Tick of Approval. A product must first be tested to determine the effect the product has on soil life. Following a single application, and if desired, the effect over time.

Products need to be tested for impacts on all of the soil food web organisms, but can be advertised as being specifically for improving one or more specific groups, while having little or no effect on other groups.

Products can be tested to determine impacts in soil, compost, tea, extract or other materials. Each situation would require separate testing, under standard conditions.

2.3.1 Standards

All testing requires a comparison material to test against, in order to determine if bacteria, fungi, protozoa, **nematodes or other organism group is impacted positively or negatively by the product.

A standard soil, compost, tea or extract (see standards in the sections above for each type of material) needs to contain a minimum of the soil food web organisms. The soil, compost, tea or extract is mixed well and divided into 2 equal parts; one of the parts are the "control", whereas three other portions will be designated as the "plus product" treatment.

The only difference between the control and product units will be the product that will be tested. If the product is added in water, then an equal amount of water will be added to the control units. If the product is a dry material, then a comparable dry material (e.g., sterile sand or the same carrier as the dry material)) will be selected and added to the control.



Total Foodweb assessment will be carried out after a time designated by the particular material tested, e.g., 0 hours, 12 hours, 24 hours, 7 days, 30 days, based on when the product manufacturer suggests the product will have an effect.

A significant increase in an organism group must be demonstrated for a Tick of Approval for that organism group to be allowed by SFI NZ. If more than one group is improved, a product could have multiple approvals.

No effect, or a degree of negative effect, will also be noted. There are many cases where improving one organism group, while having no effect on, or even decreasing another organism group, is desired.

As with other materials, the results of these tests can be posted on the SFI website, and can be used in promotional literature. SFI NZ can help write up the results of the testing so accurate representation of the scientific information is carried through.

3 SFI Senior Agronomists and Advisors

SFI Certified Advisors and Senior Agronomists have the opportunity to bring to their clients the expertise of world leading researchers in soil microbiology through SFI NZ's testing methods and detailed Grower Programs. Through the use of the latest knowledge in the management of environmental microbiology, significant enhancement of soil, water and nutrient retention can result in building more resilient growing systems to help reduce costs and minimise the impact on the environment.

The accredited SFI Advisor and Senior Agronomist will acquire appropriate knowledge plus develop a set of skills that will significantly improve the credentials of their business to new and existing clients. This will provide the confidence to include microbiological management in any growing system in a very methodical and predictive way thereby adding immense value to that relationship. SFI will support accredited advisors and agronomists by providing qualified leads as appropriate and promoting their accreditation with an entry on the SFI NZ Website and in the monthly SFI Newsletter

SFI NZ Senior Agronomists and Advisors -- The role of the SFI NZ Agronomists and Advisors is to support growers prepared to take a microbiological approach to their growing system. Typically, the consulting service of the Advisor or Agronomist are independent to SFI NZ, but advisors and agronomists have access to leading testing methodologies plus the world-wide resources of this global organization. This ensures that clients receive the best information and field support through a technically rigorous process underpinned by the most recent research findings.

Both SFI NZ Advisors and Agronomists should use the framework provided by SFI NZ Grower Programs. This agreement with a client involves the Advisor as the intermediary with SFI NZ. Typically Advisors work on one field, or a small part of the client's operation, while Agronomists oversee complete departments or whole sections of the farm operation, if not the entire farming operation.

3.1.1 Minimum Standards to qualify

- The candidate must have taken:
- Introduction to the Soil Foodweb Course



- Compost Making
- Compost Tea Making
- Microscopy
- Do at least two SFI NZ Grower Programs in association with SFI NZ for one full year and be successful in establishing biological plant production. Success must be documented.
- Approval by Dr Elaine Ingham or the Director of SFI New Zealand.

3.1.2 Obligations of the advisor/agronomist

- Maintain education by attending at least one SFI NZ training session per year
- Must follow and be an advocate for the SFI NZ approach and abide by the SFI NZ Advisor program guidelines
- In order to maintain SFI NZ advisor standing, Grower Programs must be established with growers.
- The SFI NZ Advisor/Senior Agronomist is encouraged to facilitate SFI NZ Seminars and Workshops as a mechanism for the dissemination of knowledge and learning in soil microbiological systems and their practical management to the broader growing community.
- Communication with SFI NZ is required. The Advisor/Senior Agronomist must keep SFI NZ updated on progress, interactions, concerns and successes or problems.

In order to annually recertify, the candidate must present certificates of training (copies are OK), copies of the Soil Foodweb test reports and Grower Programs, plus \$70 administrative fee. Once this information and fee are submitted, the Advisor will be issued with an annual 'Certificate of Accreditation'.

**** NB** All references to Nematode identification and quantification throughout this document are not applicable to the NZ Tick of Approval Scheme as this assay is not undertaken in NZ at this time.