

**NEHA**  
**Certified in Food Safety Supplier**  
**Audits (CFSSA)**  
**and**  
**Registered Food Safety Auditor**  
**(RFSA)**



Candidate Information Brochure



## **CFSSA Examination**

### **Eligibility Requirements**

#### **Certified in Food Safety Supplier Audits (CFSSA):**

- A. Bachelor's Degree Track: You are eligible for the CFSSA credential if you have:
1. A Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education or equivalent with 30 semester hours (or 45 quarter hours) of core science education (a combination of biological sciences, chemistry, physical sciences, food technology, nutrition, medical science, engineering, epidemiology, veterinary medical science, or related science field).
  2. Three years of experience in food production or in conducting regulatory food inspections at a supervisory or advanced capacity.
  3. Evidence of HACCP Training. Completion of HACCP training course based on the principles of CODEX Alimentarius and of a minimum duration of two days or equivalent. The course must include an assessment and result in the issuance of a certificate.
  4. Evidence of the Professional Food Safety Auditor Training Course.
- B. Experience Track: You are eligible for the CFSSA credential if you have:
1. 30 semester hours (or 45 quarter hours) of college level core science education (a combination of biological sciences, chemistry, physical sciences, food technology, nutrition, medical science, engineering, epidemiology, veterinary medical science, or related science field).
  2. Five years of experience in food protection or in conducting regulatory food inspections at a supervisory or advanced capacity.
  3. Hold a current CCFS Credential in good standing.
  4. Evidence of HACCP Training. Completion of HACCP training course based on the principles of CODEX Alimentarius and of a minimum duration of two days or equivalent. The course must include an assessment and result in the issuance of a certificate.
  5. Evidence of the Professional Food Safety Auditor Training Course.

#### **Foreign Applicants**

If you have college or university education from outside the United States or its territories, you must have your foreign education evaluated by a "third party" foreign education evaluation service to determine equivalency to a Bachelor's degree in the United States. You must submit an evaluation report with your NEHA Credential Application or the report can be sent by the evaluation service directly to NEHA.

NEHA strongly recommends you choose a service that is a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). For information on NACES member companies, go to [www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org).

Official Canadian university transcripts are accepted without a third party evaluation if they are in English.

## **Registered Food Safety Auditor (RFSA):**

1. Hold a current Certified in Food Safety Supplier Audits (CFSSA) credential.
2. Audit or inspection experience of a minimum of five audits in one food sector/category (equaling a minimum total of 80 hours) with the audits meeting or equivalent to an audit program within that same sector. Current acceptable sectors are Human, Animal, and Produce. Only experience within the past 18 months of the RFSA application being submitted will be accepted.
3. Have a sponsoring Certification Body (CB) submit an acceptable Witness Audit Checklist in one food sector/category. The Witness Audit Checklist must align with the audit or inspection experience as outlined in requirement 2.

## **Completing the Application**

Applications must be completed and returned to NEHA for review at least four (4) weeks prior to the exam date. If an application is received by NEHA less than 4 weeks prior to when an examination is being given you may have to schedule the exam for another date.

A complete application should include:

1. Completed *Application for CFSSA and RFSA Credential*.
2. Official college transcripts. To be considered an official transcript it should be received at the NEHA office in the sealed envelope from the school's Registrar's Office/Transcript Office. We will also accept electronic transcripts directly from the school.
3. Copy of HACCP certificate.
4. Evidence of the Professional Food Safety Auditor Training Course (or equivalent).
5. Appropriate fees.
6. Third party review (applicable for candidates with foreign education).

## **Exam Fees**

All fees should accompany the NEHA *Application for CFSSA and RFSA Credential*.

	<u>Member Rate</u>	<u>Non-Member Rate</u>
Application fees:	\$160.00	\$185.00
Examination fees:	\$195.00	\$310.00
Pearson VUE fee:	\$110.00	\$110.00

## **Exam Scheduling and Locations**

Candidates can take the exam on computer through *Pearson VUE*. With this option, candidates can schedule the examination at their convenience at one of *Pearson VUE's* testing locations worldwide. To find a *Pearson VUE* testing center near you please visit [www.pearsonvue.com/neha](http://www.pearsonvue.com/neha). Taking the exam at *Pearson VUE* not only offers the candidate flexibility in scheduling the exam, but also allows the candidate to receive his/her scores immediately following the conclusion of the exam.

## **Special Accommodations for Candidates with Disabilities or Impairments**

NEHA is committed to ensuring that no individual is deprived of the opportunity to take a credentialing examination solely by reason of a disability or impairment. All test centers are fully accessible and compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

To make a request for special accommodations you must complete the NEHA ADA Request Form, including the specific diagnosis of your disability; submit medical records, or other written proof of the diagnosis by an appropriate licensed professional; and the type of accommodation being requested. All forms and documentation must be returned to NEHA at least 8 weeks prior to the scheduled test date. To receive a copy of the form please contact [Credentialing@neha.org](mailto:Credentialing@neha.org).

If the forms are not returned to NEHA at least 8 weeks prior to the scheduled test date your request for special accommodations may not be honored or may be delayed.

With respect to all matters related to testing accommodations, NEHA will only communicate with the candidate, professionals knowledgeable about the candidate's disability or impairment, those responsible for administering the exam, and the candidate's authorized representative (if applicable).

## **ADMISSION TO THE EXAM**

**Pearson VUE Computer Candidates:** NEHA will send you an authorization email when your application is processed as approved. The email will have your Pearson VUE ID number and the Pearson VUE website to schedule a testing time. On test day please bring your photo identification (i.e. driver's license or passport).

## **Scores**

The scaled passing score for the CFSSA is 650. Your score will be based on the number of questions answered correctly. If you are unsure of the answer, it is better to guess. You will not be given credit for any question left blank.

The NEHA CFSSA examination reports scores using scaled scores that range from 0 to 900 with a passing score of 650. The raw passing score is mathematically transformed so that the passing scaled score equals 650. This process is similar to the way one adjusts Celsius and Fahrenheit temperature scales. While the values may differ the temperatures are the same. For example, water boils at the same temperature regardless of the scale used.

Candidates who pass the examination will earn scaled scores between 650 and above and those who fail earn a scaled score between 0 and 649. A scaled score is NOT a percentage score. In summary, a scale score is merely a transformation of a raw score. Scaling is done to report comparable results when forms and raw passing scores vary over time.

Exam results will be mailed and/or emailed to you from the NEHA office 4-6 weeks after the administration.

### **Retaking the Exam**

An individual who fails a credential exam will receive a retake application 4-6 weeks after they tested. The individual must wait 90 days after the date of their last exam before they may retake the exam. There is no limit to the number of times an individual may retake the exam.

You may submit your retake application and pay at any time and will receive a notification 4-6 weeks later with information on setting up the exam. Retake applications are valid for a period of 2 years from the date of your last exam. If you do not take the exam within 2 years of your last exam, then you will need to reapply for the credential and pay all applicable fees.

### **Credential Maintenance**

Once you have obtained the CFSSA credential you must maintain it. To keep your credential in good standing you must:

1. Submit a minimum of 24 hours of continuing education every two years; and
2. Submit renewal fees for your credential every two years (\$130.00 members; \$345.00 non-members).

### **NEHA's Credentialing Handbook**

It is strongly recommended that you read NEHA's Credentialing Handbook: *Guide to Policies and Procedures for NEHA's Credentialing Programs*. This handbook, which can be downloaded from the NEHA website at <https://www.neha.org/sites/default/files/pd/cred-cert/Credentialing-Handbook.pdf>, outlines all the policies you are expected to follow by being a NEHA credential holder. The handbook also outlines in further detail the procedures for applying for a credential, submitting continuing education, and maintaining your credential.

### **Exam Description and Content Outline**

The CFSSA examination consists of a total of 175 multiple-choice questions. Candidates are given a total of three (3) hours to complete the exam, with no scheduled break. There will be a total of 175 items on the examination, 150 of which will be scored and 25 unscored pilot items. The scored items are reflective of the exam blueprint listed below.

Below is an outline of the five (5) different content areas the examination covers and the percentages allotted to each of those areas. Please use this outline as a guide when preparing for the examination.

	<b>Food Safety Auditor Domains/Tasks</b>	<b># of items</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Planning Food Safety Audits</b>	<b>22</b>
1	Verify the Scope of the Audit	6
2	Review the History of the Facility	6
3	Determine Resource Needs	5
4	Verify the Audit Timetable	5
<b>B</b>	<b>Conducting an Audit</b>	<b>54</b>
1	Conduct and Opening Meeting	6
2	Conduct a Program Review	10

3	Conduct Onsite (Stage 2) Audit	7
4	Verify Effectiveness of Training Programs	5
5	Conduct Record Review	6
6	Verify the Effectiveness of Previous CAR Corrections/Noted Deficiencies (if applicable)	6
7	Document Audit Observations	7
8	Conduct a Closing Meeting	7
<b>C</b>	<b>Verifying Food Safety Programs</b>	<b>23</b>
1	Observe Facility Processes	13
2	Verify Monitoring of CCPs	10
<b>D</b>	<b>Verifying Prerequisite Programs</b>	<b>24</b>
1	Verify Product Compliance/Conformity	9
2	Inspect Facility	9
3	Inspect Facility Exterior and Grounds	6
<b>E</b>	<b>Conducting Post-Audit Activities</b>	<b>27</b>
1	Document Audit Findings	7
2	Verify Effectiveness of Corrective Actions	4
3	Create Summary Report of Audit	4
4	Create Serious Incident Report	3
5	Create Audit Report	3
6	Assess and Submit Audit Results	3
7	Communicate with Stakeholders (Auditee, Public, others)	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>

### **Recommended Study References**

Many textbooks are available for purchase through the NEHA online [Bookstore](#).