

# AGS Certified Judge Training Program – Revised 1/1/2016

In 2013 the American Gourd Society judge training program was modified to include three types of judges for our competitions: Apprentice Judge, Certified Judge, and Certified Judge/Instructor. At this same time the requirements to achieve and hold these offices were expanded. Recently it was felt that the program should be streamlined and simplified while striving to achieve and maintain the highest standards with which our competitions are conducted.

A steering committee of Bonnie Gibson, Judy Richie, Terry Noxell, Reggie Eakin, and Cecile Garrison reviewed and approved the program outlined below.

## **I. APPRENTICE JUDGE**

### Requirement to become an AGS Apprentice Judge

1. Must be a current AGS Member/maintains AGS membership during the Apprentice period.
2. Completes and submits the AGS Certified Judge Application found on the AGS Website.  
<http://americangourdsociety.org/judging/Applicationblank.pdf>
3. Attends 1 AGS Judge Training Program led by an AGS Certified Judge/Instructor.
  - After completion of the training program the participant becomes an apprentice.
4. Participates as a Judge or Clerk at a Gourd Competition at least 1 time within 2 years.
  - AGS Chapter Shows that follow the AGS Judging Criteria
  - AGS Chapter Shows that have competitions that are similar to the AGS Judging Criteria.
  - State or County Fairs/Farm Shows with a Gourd Category
5. After completion of the training course and judging one show the candidate becomes a certified Judge.

## **II. CERTIFIED JUDGE**

### Requirements to become an AGS Certified Judge

1. Maintain membership on the American Gourd Society
2. Completes the 4 apprentice requirements, the candidate becomes a Certified Judge (Membership, Application, AGS Judge Training Class, and Serving as Judge or Clerk).
3. If the judge's AGS membership has lapsed or the judge is unable to maintain their certification, their certification may be renewed by participating in an AGS Judge Training Program.

### Maintaining Credentials as a Certified Judge

1. Maintains AGS Membership in the 3-year renewal period (minor lapses may be overlooked)
2. Judge and/or clerk a minimum of 1 AGS (or other Gourd) Competitions in the 3-year renewal period.
3. Leads or participates as a leader in 1 educational activity in the 3 year renewal period.
  - Leads or participates in a "Practice Judging" session.
  - Teach a "What Judges Look For" class.
  - 2013 AGS Judging Guidelines by Category.
  - Aids in the teaching of an AGS Judge Training Program.

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## III. JUDGE INSTRUCTOR

### Requirements to become a Certified Judge Instructor

1. Maintain AGS membership and Certified Judge requirements.
2. Has served for two or more years as an AGS certified judge.
3. Has participated as a Judge in at least one Gourd Show in the last 2 years.
4. Applies to become an AGS Certified Judge/Instructor.
5. Has co-led 1 or more AGS Judge Training programs in the last 2 years.
  - All leaders in a session will receive credit

### Maintaining Credentials as a Judge Instructor

1. Report on the judging activities conducted in their AGS Gourd Chapter.
  - One of the leaders should report on the members attending.
2. Conduct a minimum of 1 AGS Judge Training/Educational Event every three years.
  - Publicize upcoming training events in the AGS magazine and AGS website via the AGS Judging Coordinator.
3. Optional: AGS Judge Instructors are encouraged to write/contribute to an educational article for the AGS magazine

## IV. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The AGS Judging Coordinator will maintain a database with a record for each judge.

### WHO REPORTS?

1. **Judges and candidates** are responsible for submitting the information listed below to update their record.
2. **Chapter Show Chairmen** – please provide the Coordinator with a list of the judges, clerks, and head judge who worked in your competition.
3. **Leader of Practice Sessions** - please send a list of those judges who participated in your practice session
4. **If your state chapter has a record keeper** for their judges, sharing the data would also be helpful.

### WHAT IS REPORTED?

1. AGS Judge Training Program
  - Date, location, leaders, candidates, renewals
  - Candidate's membership expiration date (from their magazine label)
  - Candidate's e-mail address and home address.
2. Practice Judging session – Date, Location, Participants
3. “What Judges Look For” program – Date, Location, Participants
4. Judging/Clerking Gourd Shows.
  - Name of Show – Date, your role (clerk, judge, or head judge)

### **SEND THIS INFORMATION TO:**

1. E-mail: [agsjudge30@gmail.com](mailto:agsjudge30@gmail.com)
2. By mail to Reggie Eakin, 218 Golf Club Drive, Metter, GA 30439

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## Definitions and Explanations

**2013 Titles:** No changes have been made to the 2013 designations. New trained judges will be titled **Apprentice Judge** after completing AGS Judge Training Program and receive a temporary tag that identifies them as apprentices. When the apprentice has completed serving as a judge or clerk, they become a **Certified Judge** and receive a permanent name tag (these are ordered through the AGS program coordinator). Those who have completed the trainer requirements will be identified as **Certified Judge/Instructor**.

## Achieving and Maintaining Certified Judge Credentials

Because of spotty reporting and a high turn-over of those who achieved the Certified Judge ranking, we felt that we should streamline the program.

**All certified judges should complete two activities every two years.** One of those activities must be **serving as a judge** or clerk and the other requirements is to lead or **participate in one of the educational activities** listed below.

If you were or are a certified judge and you have been unable to meet the renewal criteria under the 2003 requirements and you would like to renew your certification now, please advise the program coordinator (Reggie Eakin [agsjudge30@gmail.com](mailto:agsjudge30@gmail.com)). You should also participate in one of these educational activities.

**Lead or Participate in a “Practice Judging” session.** If you are the member of Chapter or Patch with other judges, you can organize or participate in a mock judging event at one of your meetings. You may do this as often as you want, but before a Gourd Show would be an ideal time for judges to participate in a practice judging session. Remember too, that each judge is also a gourd artist and most likely they have more skill in one area than another. Use these practice sessions to learn from each other.

1. **Teach a “What Judges Look For”** class at a Chapter or gourd patch meeting. AGS Judges can obtain credit by offering a “What Judges Look For” class at a Chapter or Patch meeting. See the AGS website for 2013 AGS Judging Guidelines by Category <http://americangourdsociety.org/judging/13byCategory.pdf>  
You can hold this class more than once. In some areas, you want to do this annually.
2. **Create an online U-Tube video** judging course that will simulate the judging experience. The application of the skills of judging (e.g., observation, AGS criteria & procedures) should be demonstrated. Submit your course outline to the coordinator before filming.
3. **Lead or co-lead 1 or more AGS Judge Training** programs in the last 2 years.

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### **AGS Certified Judge/Instructor Requirements**

AGS Certified Judges with 2 or more years of judging experience may apply to become an AGS Certified Judge/Instructor.

AGS Judge Instructors agree to:

1. Lead or co-lead a minimum of 1 AGS Judge Training Event every 3 years.
2. Publicize upcoming training events in the AGS magazine and on the AGS website via the AGS Judging Coordinator.
3. Maintain AGS membership and Certified Judge requirements
4. Optional: AGS Judge Instructors are encouraged to write/contribute to an educational article for the AGS magazine.

### **Judging Ethics**

Regardless of the venue of the competition, when selected to judge, you will be expected to adhere to the criteria and procedures in the AGS Judging Handbook. We hope you, as a Certified Judge, will show no favoritism, avoid negativity towards the artwork or exhibits, encourage new artists, give educational and respectful comments, and exhibit willingness to continuously learn. Through application of the AGS criteria, procedures, and your own judging skills, the competitions will identify the best examples for every category at all shows our judges participate in.

Become familiar with the category rules for the venue where you are judging. Do not apply your own rules. If you are unable to apply that society's or venue's definitions or rules, excuse yourself and let another judge handle that category.

When judging, you should not be an advocate for a particular artist or specific technique. If you know the artists or the artist has explained their technique to you, you must not tell that privileged information to the other judges. Instead, you should excuse yourself in favor of another judge for that particular category.

If you observe copyright infringement, improper placement, or classwork, quietly speak to the head judge and probably the competition chairperson for guidance.