

Preparing for professional practice

As a student, your focus is on learning about the science of agriculture, bioresources, food, environment, etc., but do you know about professional practice and what being an agrologist is all about?

This fact sheet provides information on the profession of agrology, the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists, and why those practicing agrology need to be registered with their provincial regulator.

What is the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists (SIA)?

The SIA is the provincial body that registers agrologists and provides an annual licence to practice. SIA regulates agrologists in the same manner as other institutes regulate professional engineers (PEng), chartered accountants (CPA), lawyers, etc. – with the mandate to protect the public interest.

Who should register with the SIA?

The Agrologists Act requires that persons practicing agrology in the Province of Saskatchewan be registered with the SIA and pay an annual license to practice fee. The purpose of the legislation is to protect the public interest by ensuring agrologists are qualified, competent and understand the professional Code of Ethics and Practice Standards.

What is the definition of “practice agrology”?

The Agrologists Act, Section 2, subsection (h) states: “practice agrology means engage in investigating, experimenting with, teaching or advising on the application of scientific principles and practices with respect to: ...”

The balance of the definition describes production agriculture including economists and the wise use of natural resources. A copy of *The Agrologists Act* is available on the SIA website at sia.sk.ca/acts-bylaws-agreements/

What areas do agrologists work in?

Practice areas include agronomy, agribusiness, animal science, food science, plant science, soil science and ecology, environmental science, and more. See the attached Scopes of Practice list for details.

What is the history of the profession of agrology?

The profession of agrology originated in Saskatchewan in 1946 with the passing of *The Agrologists Act* by the Saskatchewan legislature. Professor J. B. Harrington at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Agriculture coined the term from the Greek word "agro" meaning field or tilled land and "logist" mean science. The term "agrologist" gained rapid acceptance across Canada and includes all aspects of agriculture and food.

Who qualifies as an "agrologist"?

Graduates from the USask College of Agriculture & Bioresources are eligible for membership in the SIA. If you are working in Saskatchewan as an agrologist, you must apply for the articling program. Completion of the three-year program qualifies individuals as a Professional Agrologist (PAg) or Technical Agrologist (TechAg). Those with equivalent science or business degrees may also be eligible for registration.

Why should I be registered with SIA?

It is a legal requirement and there are fines and penalties for non-compliance. Any person practicing agrology in Saskatchewan and qualified to be registered with the SIA must hold a current SIA License to Practice as mandated by *The Agrologists Act*.

Ancillary benefits include having a network of professional peers and strengthening career opportunities.

Reasons to become a Student Affiliate Member of SIA?

Students enrolled in the College of AgBio can become SIA Student Affiliate Members. The annual cost is \$10.00 per school year (September 1 to August 31) and benefits include:

- a chance to win a \$1,000 bursary (must apply by **October 15**)
- a weekly newsletter with information about the profession and career opportunities,
- networking opportunities with employers of AgBio grads and faculty,
- free registration for SIA Branch events, and
- members in their graduation year will receive a 50% discount on the \$200 application fee when joining as an articling member by June 30th for spring convocation and Dec 15th for fall convocation. *Note: you must have a current student affiliate membership in order to receive the discount.*

Apply for your SIA Student Affiliate Membership at <https://sia.sk.ca/student-affiliate-member/>

How do I apply to be an articling member?

Following convocation, submit your articling application online at <https://sia.sk.ca/articling-program/> with all required documents.

If you are a current Student Affiliate Member, remember to select the cheque option to have the \$200 application fee waived.

What are the steps to becoming a professional agrologist?

Those who are in the articling program are required to complete all the Articling Milestones before **applying** to be a Professional Agrologist (PAG) or Technical Agrologist (TechAg). The milestones are:

1. Attend a compulsory Orientation to Agrology Workshop as the first step in the articling process. Workshop dates are posted online (www.sia.sk.ca/events/) and in the *Agrology Update Memo*, SIA's email newsletter.
2. Attend two Branch Activities (Branch Annual General Meetings are NOT considered Branch Activities).
3. Attend one Branch Annual General Meeting
4. Attend one Provincial Annual Convention
5. Attend one Provincial Annual General Meeting
6. Attend one Articling Milestone Ethics Workshop

Additionally, all agrologists, including articling agrologists, must report Continuing Professional Development hours each year, and earn three-years of relevant work experience in their self-declared scope of practice.