

# The Profession of Agrology



# WHAT'S AN AGROLOGIST?

Science-based professionals in  
**agriculture, food and related  
environment areas –**

who responsibly **teach, provide  
advise & conduct research.**



# Agrology - Application of Science

- Agrology is the application of natural life sciences to agriculture, bioresources, food and the environment.
- The application of **science** - is the central basis of agrologists work in aiding the public to make informed decisions.

# Agrologists

Science-based professionals working in:

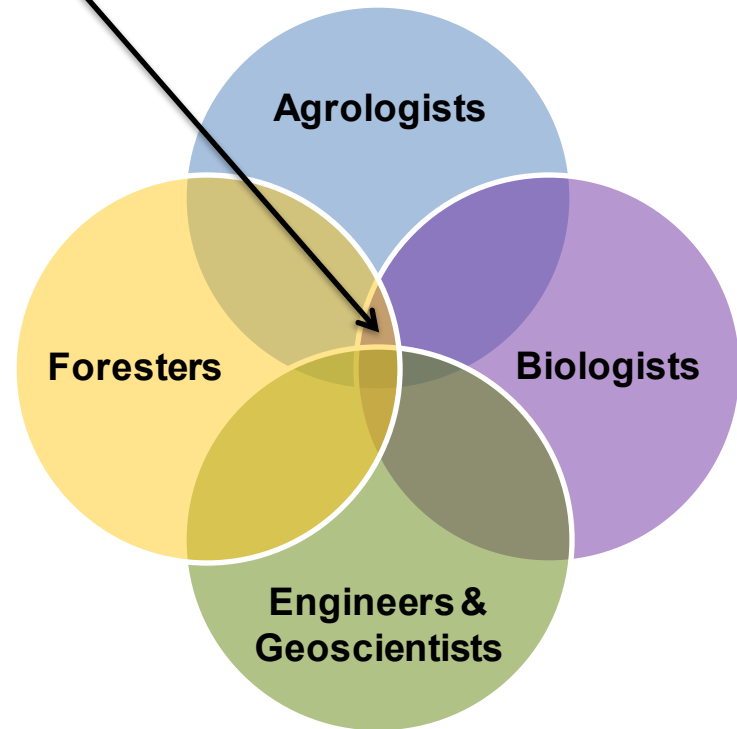
- Renewable Resources
- Agribusiness
- Livestock Management
- Watershed Management
- Policy Development
- Agronomy
- Food Science
- Biotechnology



# Other Resource Professionals

*Overlap of Four Groups*

- **Overlapping Scopes of Practice of Resource Professionals**
- **Strength is in working in collaboration**



# What does registration mean?

Agrologists have the “***right to title***” and the “***right to practice***” the same as accountants, doctors, engineers, lawyers who must have a license in order to practice their profession.

**Right to Title**: Only a registered member can use the title agrologists, or related terms such as agronomist, horticulturalist, animal nutritionist, etc.

**Right to Practice**: Regardless of your position title, if you are qualified and practicing, you must be registered and hold a licence.



# Primary Benefits of Registration

- **Pride** in being part of a profession that is **self-regulated** and demands ethical and competent practice
- **Recognition** by industry and society that you are a trained and qualified professional dedicated to protecting the public
- **Protection** from legal action because you are eligible to carry professional liability (E&O) insurance
- **Practice License** means the legislated right to practice agrology in Saskatchewan as a licensed professional
- **Leadership** as “*guardians of the food system*” and “*stewards of the environment*” in protecting our social licence

In addition to the **primary** benefits:

- Transferability of professional designation across Canada (labour mobility)
- Ability to use a SIA stamp or seal to indicate to the public the document has been produced under the supervision of a professional member of the Institute





# Streams of Registration

## Professional Agrologist (PAg)

- Basic Criteria
  - 4 Year agrology-related degree from the U of S or equivalent with credit in required courses.
  - Graduate degree approved by Registration & Admissions Committee.

## Technical Agrologist (TechAg)

- Basic Criteria
  - a two-year diploma in agriculture, food or related environmental program approved by the Admissions and Registration committee



# Path to Full Registration

- Applicants in either stream start in the **articling program** as either an:
  - Articling Agrologists (AAg), or
  - Articling Technical Agrologist (ATechAg)
- After completing specified “articling milestones”, applicants request **full registration** as either:
  - Professional Agrologists (PAg)
  - Technical Agrologist (TechAg)



# PURPOSE OF ARTICLING PROGRAM

To understand:

- The safe, competent & ethical practice of Agrology
- Role of the Institute
- Opportunities to develop relationships with other practicing agrologists



*Part 2*

## **Introduction of the Institute**



- **Objective of Institute**
- **Organizational Structure**
- **Professional Regulation**
- **Act & Bylaws**
- **Good Standing Criteria**
- **Registration Statistics**

# SIA'S MISSION

***The Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists is a regulated profession that protects the public interest by ensuring:***

- ***All people practicing agrology in Saskatchewan are qualified and licensed***
- ***Members provide accurate, science-based knowledge and advice on agriculture, the sustainability of the food system, and protection and stewardship of our natural resources***
- ***Collaboration with all stakeholders***
- ***Transparency and accountability***



# To Protect the Public

- *The Agriologists Act* exists “**to protect the public.**”
- The two key words are “protect” and “public”.
  - **Protect** means to reduce or manage the risk relating to economics (financial), environmental and health and safety.
  - **Public** refers to both producers and consumers.

# Objectives of Institute

- Promote and increase the knowledge, skill and proficiency of its members in the practice of agrology
- To do all things that may be necessary, incidental or conducive to the usefulness of Agrologists and Technical Agrologists to the public
- Protect the public in all matters relating to agrology

*As per the Agrologists Act, 1994*



# Objectives of Institute

*As per the Agrologists Act*



Improve agrology services and agrology education



Increase public assurance of safety of food supply



Promote the wise use of natural resources



Monitor the environmental sensitivity of the agri-food industry



# Provincial Council Structure

<i>Position</i>	<i>Appointed or Elected</i>
<b>President</b>	Elected by Membership
<b>President Elect</b>	Elected by Membership
<b>Branch Reps (6)</b>	Elected by Branches
<b>TechAg Rep</b>	Elected by Membership
<b>Farmer Rep</b>	Elected by Membership
<b>Public Reps (2)</b>	Appointed by Ministry of Agriculture
<b>College of Agriculture &amp; Bio Rep</b>	Appointed by college



# Self-Regulation

- Self-regulation means that a profession has been granted the authority by legal statute to ensure the quality of professional competence and conduct of its members.
- Self-regulation is based on the overarching duty **to protect the public.**
- Regulation carried out in the public interest and the regulatory body is accountable **to the public.**



# Canadian Regulation of Professions

- The regulation of the professions is provincial jurisdiction, coming within “property and civil rights in the Province” in section 92(13) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*
- Statutes state and the Supreme Court of Canada has determined that the **primary purpose of a self-governing professions is the protection of the public**



# Aspects of Regulation

## ■ Registration

- Qualified persons are registered and licensed as members
- Members are subject to investigation and discipline for professional incompetence and professional misconduct

## ■ Prohibition *(Agrologists Act, (s.22))*

- Unqualified persons are prohibited from using title and/or from engaging in professional practice



# Professional Regulation in SK

Over 40 statutes in SK regulating professions

Agrologists are regulated by the *Agrologists Act*

Some legislation is “right to practice” and some is “right to title”

- ***The Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act***
  - Requires Engineers and Geoscientists to be licensed
- ***The Interior Designers Act***
  - Only protects the title “Interior Designer” but no requirement for membership to engage in practice
- ***The Agrologists Act***
  - Requires Agrologists to be licensed



# Agrologists Act & Bylaws

***The Agrologists Act***

*Approved by the Legislature*



**Bylaws (Administrative & Regulatory)**

*Approved by Members*



**Policies & Procedures**

*Approved by Provincial Council*



# Regulation of Professionals

- Agrologists are subject to the legislation of the *Agrologists Act* and Bylaws
- Regulatory Bylaws contain a “Code of Ethics” to be followed by all members
- Complaints can be made about the ***competence and conduct*** of registered agrologists



# “Good Standing” Criteria

- **To be classified as an agrologist in good standing:**
  - Pay annual registration fees by *Dec. 31*
  - Submit report of annual CPD online *by Dec. 31*
- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**
  - All agrologists must demonstrate competency by reporting 35 hours per year OR a minimum of 105 hours over the most recent 3-year period





*Part 3*

## **Professionalism & Ethics**



- **Meaning of Ethics**
- **Institute Code of Ethics**
- ***Agrologists Act***
- **Due Diligence**
- **Professional Misconduct  
or Incompetence**
- **Disciplinary Process**

# Meaning Of Ethics

- **Ethics Defined** (*Merriam Webster Dictionary*)
  - The discipline dealing with what is good & bad
- **Harmonized link between:**
  - Feelings
  - Thoughts
  - Actions
  - Communications

# Ethical Positions

- Ethical **POSITIONS** must be identified for:
  - Your profession
  - Your organization
  - You personally
- If lack of harmony between these, there could be conflict that disrupts your service to the public

# Ethical Components

- Four **COMPONENTS** to ethical positions:
  - Competency
  - Integrity
  - Objectivity
  - Honesty
- If your *organization, profession, and you* are not known to be strongly linked to these components, it is impossible to practice at your full capability.

# Code of Ethics

- The profession of Agrology demands integrity, competence and objectivity in the conduct of its members while fulfilling their professional responsibilities to the:
  1. Public
  2. Employer or client
  3. Profession
  4. Other Agrologists

# 1. Responsibility to the Public

- Practice only in those fields where the agrologists' training, ability and experience make them professionally qualified
- Express a professional opinion only when:
  - Founded on adequate knowledge and experience
  - Where agrologists' have an understanding of the situation and context against which this opinion is being offered

# 1. Responsibility to the Public

- Advocate and practice good stewardship of resources based on sound scientific principles.
- Extend public knowledge and to promote truthful and accurate statements on sustainable agricultural systems and environmental matters.
- Maintain proper regard for the safety of others in all work

## 2. Responsibility to the Client

- Act conscientiously and diligently in providing professional services
- Maintain the confidentiality of client/employer information, unless given the explicit consent – except if the law requires
- Obtain a clear understanding of the client or employer's objectives



## 2. Responsibility to the Client

- Inform the client or employer of any action planned or undertaken that agrologists' believe is detrimental to good stewardship or in breach of known laws or regulations
- Refuse any assignment that creates a conflict of interest
- Not accept compensation from more than one employer or client for the same work, without consent.

# 3. Responsibility to the Profession

- Inspire confidence in agrology by maintaining high standards in conduct and work
- Support activities for the advancement of the profession
- Where agrologists' believe another individual may be guilty of misconduct or incompetence;
  - To raise the matter with that individual, and
  - If not resolved, to inform the Registrar in writing

# 3. Responsibility to the Profession

- State clearly on whose behalf professional statements or opinions are made
- Sign and seal only those plans, reports and other documents for which agrologists are professionally responsible and which were prepared by them or under their direction.

# 4. Responsibility to Other Members

- Abstain from undignified or misleading public communication with or about Agrologists
- Give credit for professional work to whom credit is due
- Share knowledge and experience with other Agrologists

# Professional vs Professionalism

- Anyone can conduct themselves in a professional manner (*although not required*)
- Professionals **MUST** always conduct themselves in a professional manner (*this is non-negotiable*)
- Your conduct affects other Professional Agrologists and the profession.

# Due Diligence

- **Due Diligence Defined** (*Merriam Webster Dictionary*)
  - The care that a reasonable person exercises to avoid harm to other persons or their property.
- Investigate - understand the task to be completed
- Completing all the work necessary.
- Present findings to the client in a manner that will ensure understanding of the results.
- Due diligence ensures that a minimum level of service is provided.



# Misconduct or Incompetence

- Concerned about the conduct or competency of a member or individual practicing Agrology?
  - Use the Institute's Complaint's Process
- The complaints process is part of the process by which the Institute protects the public from the unauthorized or unprofessional practice of Agrology.

# Complaint's Process

- **Submit Complaint**
  - Written
  - Toll-Free Complaint's Line
- **Executive Director/Registrar Reviews Complaint**
  - If no merit – Complaint is Rejected
  - If merit – Passes to Professional Conduct Committee



# Complaint's Process

- **Professional Conduct Committee Investigates Complaint**
  - If no merit – Complaint is Rejected
  - If merit – Passes to Discipline Committee
- **Discipline Committee Holds a Hearing**
  - If found not guilty – Complaint is Rejected
  - If found guilty – Disciplinary Action is Determined

# Disciplinary Action

- Disciplinary action may involve:
  - Suspension
  - Loss of License
  - Probation
  - Fine
  - Cost of Hearing

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*Professionals in Agriculture, Bioresources, Food & the Environment*