

SECTION 1

History of the BCIA

Shortly after the First World War, it became apparent to a group of scientists working in Canadian agriculture, that it was essential to have an organization that could bring all agricultural scientists together, to discuss common problems, consider new findings and developments, and generally correlate the work of the various branches of science.

A group of five men were appointed to seek a solution, the result being the Canadian Society of Technical Agriculturalists (C.S.T.A.). The first organizing convention was held in 1920 and Dr. L.S. Klinck, of the University of British Columbia was elected president. In 1945, the organization's name was changed to the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC).

The British North America Act gave full power of formation, recognition and control of all professional groups to provincial legislatures. Therefore AIC could not gain legal professional status for all its members on a country-wide basis and each province would have to form its own body for this purpose.

In April 1947, the BC legislature passed the Agrologists Act, creating the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists (BCIA). The institute's bylaws went into effect on June 1 of that year.

As it is today, the role of the institute was to protect the public interest through the governing of the professional conduct of its members.

Agrology in the 1947 Act was very narrowly defined, applying almost exclusively to those working in the agri-food industry.

In 2003, a new Agrologists Act was brought into force. The new act was part of a general policy of government to place greater reliance on the self-regulating professions for policing professional behaviour and setting and maintaining professional standards.

Agrology, once almost solely concerned with agriculture, is now more broadly defined as:

"... using agricultural and natural sciences and agricultural and resource economics, including collecting or analyzing data or carrying out research or assessments, to design, evaluate, advise on, direct or otherwise provide professional support to

(a) the cultivation, production, improvement, processing or marketing of aquatic or terrestrial plants or animals, or

(b) the classification, management, use, conservation, protection, restoration, reclamation or enhancement of aquatic or terrestrial ecosystems that are affected by, sustain, or have the potential to sustain the cultivation or production of aquatic or terrestrial plants or animals.

Today's BCIA has over 1,200 members working in agrology in British Columbia.