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Issue 4 // Oct 2026

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*The Future of Regional Professional
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*By Jennifer Lawrence,
BCIA CEO & Registrar*

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*Upholding Standards,
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THE FALL ISSUE



BC INSTITUTE OF
AGROLOGISTS
Cultivating Natural Resource Professionals

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PUBLISHED BY

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ABOUT US

The BC Institute of Agrologists regulates the profession of agrology in British Columbia to protect the public by ensuring safe, competent, and ethical practice.

BCIA acknowledges that our office is located on the lands of the Lekwungen (Songhees) and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) ancestors and families.



RECAP

CEO Reflections from the Field

by Jennifer Lawrence, CEO & Registrar

One of the things I have come to appreciate about my role at BCIA

is the opportunity to step away from the office, put on my boots, and learn directly from the professionals who provide services and advice to the public under our regulatory structures.

Earlier this year, our Boots on the Ground Tour took us through the Okanagan, where we explored a remarkable diversity of professional practice, from ecological restoration and contaminated sites to range management, orchard production, and integrated pest management. I want to thank each person who so generously gave their time to share their expertise and insights with us – I am deeply grateful to have been able to learn from them.

While each visit offered valuable insights into the technical knowledge, professional judgment, and practical realities of agrology, I found myself reflecting on something broader: the interconnectedness of the systems within which our registrants work.

Soil, water, air, plants, animals, and people do not exist in isolation. Changes to one can have profound implications for another. And while this is hardly a revelation to anyone working in the natural resource or agricultural sectors, it prompted me to think more deeply about how we, as professional regulators, approach our responsibilities.

We organize professional regulation around defined professions, scopes of practice, and areas of expertise. These distinctions serve important purposes, helping establish accountability, professional standards, and public protection. But the natural world doesn't often recognize those boundaries.

A watershed doesn't distinguish between the work of an agrologist, a biologist, a forester, or an engineer. Neither does a contaminated site, a restoration project, or a complex land-use decision. These environments demand knowledge and expertise that frequently extend beyond the boundaries of any single profession.

In many respects, the professionals working in the field are already navigating these intersections in ways that we, as regulators, are still working to fully address in a regulatory context. But it certainly isn't always straightforward for registrants to navigate. Determining where one area of professional practice meets up with another, when additional expertise is needed, and how to navigate professional boundaries can be complex, even for experienced practitioners.

Perhaps part of the challenge lies in how we think about professional practice itself. Even the use of the term "boundaries," suggests that there are clear lines separating one profession from another. Yet the reality is rarely so neatly defined. Professional practice exists along a continuum of interconnected knowledge, expertise, and responsibility.

In fact, the public and the environment is better served and protected when interdisciplinary practice is harnessed appropriately. Our challenge, as regulators, is to provide the clarity needed to support competent, accountable practice without losing sight of that interdisciplinary practice approach and ultimately what is in the public interest.

That observation raises some interesting questions. How do we maintain clear professional accountability while recognizing

the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of practice? How do we ensure that regulatory boundaries support, rather than inadvertently complicate, the collaboration needed to protect the public and the environment? And what might we learn by paying closer attention to how professionals are already navigating these challenges?

I don't profess to have the answers. But I do believe these are important questions worth exploring.

For me, that is the real value of Boots on the Ground. It isn't simply an opportunity to better understand the technical aspects of agrology. It is an opportunity to challenge assumptions, broaden perspectives, and consider how our approach to regulation can continue to evolve alongside professional practice.

I came away from the Okanagan with a deeper appreciation for the complexity of the work our registrants undertake, the care and judgment they bring to it, and the importance of remaining curious about what effective regulation looks like in practice.

There is still much to learn, and I look forward to more Boots on the Ground opportunities, more conversations with registrants, and perhaps a few more questions that we haven't yet thought to ask.



Growing Something New:

The Future of Regional Professional Development

Change is rarely without a little nostalgia. For many registrants, BCIA's branches have been an important part of their professional community, creating opportunities to connect with colleagues, share knowledge, and contribute to the profession. As we transition away from the branch structure, we recognize that, for some, saying goodbye to something so familiar may be difficult.

However with change also comes opportunity.

The transition to Regional Professional Development (PD) Working Groups and a Provincial PD Advisory Group represents an opportunity to build something that is more coordinated, diverse, and responsive to the evolving needs of registrants across British Columbia while at the same time becomes more closely aligned with our regulatory mandate under the *Professional Governance Act*. By bringing together perspectives from different regions and practice areas, we have an opportunity to create a richer, more relevant PD experience for everyone.

The success of this new model will depend on the people who step forward to help shape it.

Serving on a Regional PD Working Group is an opportunity to have a meaningful voice in the future of professional development. Whether you have ideas for new learning opportunities, understand the unique needs of your region, or simply want to contribute to a stronger professional community, your perspective matters.

Throughout fall 2026 and early 2027, regional meetings will be held in place of the traditional branch Annual General Meetings. These gatherings will provide an opportunity to learn more about the new model, ask questions, connect with colleagues, and put your name forward to participate.

For more information about the transition and the new regional working group structure, [visit our website](#).

As we acknowledge the contributions of our branches and those who have nurtured them over the years, we also look ahead with optimism. In agrology, we understand that growth requires both strong roots and the willingness to cultivate something new. The foundation has been laid. What grows from here is up to all of us.



Articling Program Changes:

Upholding Standards, Enhancing Flexibility

Preparing for professional practice is an important step in becoming an agrologist, and BCIA continues to look for ways to make that journey more accessible and straightforward while maintaining the professional standards that protect the public.

As part of BCIA's transition to the new Regional Professional Development (PD) Working Group model, the Board has approved changes to the Articling Program that remove several branch-related requirements, effective immediately. These adjustments simplify the program while keeping the focus on what matters: developing the knowledge, skills, and professional judgment needed for competent practice.

What's changing?

The following four branch-based requirements have been removed from the Articling Program:

- Attendance at a branch PD event
- Attendance at a branch AGM
- Providing a short articling introduction at the branch AGM
- Volunteering at a branch or BCIA event, attending a branch executive meeting, or serving on a professional group

While participation in branch activities is no longer a formal articling requirement, BCIA continues to encourage articling registrants to engage with their Regional PD Working Groups and participate in regional professional development events. Building relationships, exchanging knowledge, and learning from colleagues are valuable aspects of professional practice that extend well beyond the articling period.

What stays the same?

The core components of the Articling Program remain unchanged. Articling registrants will continue to work with a mentor throughout their articling period, complete required professional development and ethics training, undertake Indigenous Peoples Cultural Awareness training, and document their competency development through the BCIA PD report.

The requirements for advancement to full status also remain unchanged. These include completing a final articling review, finalizing the articling checklist with the required signatures, obtaining a recommendation from a mentor, and providing two professional references that speak to the registrant's competence, conduct, experience, and readiness for professional practice.

Coming soon: Online Ethics Course

BCIA is looking forward to launching its Ethics Course in a new online format this fall. Moving to online delivery will make this important learning opportunity more accessible to articling registrants and other registrants across the province, providing greater flexibility to complete the course at a time and pace that works for them.

The new course has been designed to provide a robust and engaging learning experience, reinforcing the ethical principles, professional responsibilities, and standards of conduct that underpin competent professional practice. Delivered through a secure online platform, the course incorporates features that promote active, individual participation and meaningful engagement with the material.

More details about the course and its launch will be shared in the coming weeks.

One step closer!

For articling registrants whose only outstanding requirements were branch-related activities, these changes mean they can now move directly to completing their end-of-program documentation.

Eligible articling registrants are encouraged to submit their advancement packages through the Articling Program Portal and take the next step toward full professional status.

Professional Practice in a Changing World:

Join Us for BCIA's Inaugural Symposium!

On October 30, 2026, BCIA will bring agrology professionals from across British Columbia together for a full day of learning, discussion, and connection at our inaugural virtual symposium, Professional Practice in a Changing World.

With an incredible lineup of speakers and topics ranging from Indigenous food sovereignty and land reclamation to interdisciplinary professional practice and the ethical use of artificial intelligence, this is an opportunity registrants won't want to miss.

Meet Our Keynote Speaker: Jared Qwustenuxun Williams



We are excited to welcome Jared Qwustenuxun Williams, an Indigenous chef, Hul'q'umi'num language speaker, Salish culture educator, and passionate advocate for Indigenous food sovereignty, who will open our symposium with a presentation on Indigenous Food Systems & Land Stewardship.

Raised in Quw'utsun (Cowichan), Jared grew up immersed in Coast Salish culture, learning from his father and late grandmother about traditional harvesting, Indigenous foods, smokehouses, language, and the stories connecting his people to the land. These early teachings have shaped a remarkable career dedicated to preserving and revitalizing Indigenous food knowledge and cultural practices.

After graduating from culinary arts in 2001, Jared spent years working in kitchens across Vancouver Island before returning home to reconnect his culinary experience with the traditional foods of his community. He went on to spend nearly fifteen years cooking for community Elders at the Cowichan Tribes Elders Building, an experience that further strengthened his commitment to Indigenous food sovereignty and cultural revitalization.

Today, Jared's work extends well beyond the kitchen. He serves as Chair of the Indigenous Advisory Council to BC's Ministry of Agriculture and Food, supports the inclusion of traditional Indigenous foods in healthcare settings, and works with researchers, schools, and organizations to strengthen understanding of Indigenous knowledge systems, cultural safety, and the relationships between food, land, and community well-being.

His work has taken him to the United Nations World Food Forum in Rome, TEDx events, and television programs including Moosemeat & Marmalade. He has also contributed to important initiatives such as the First Nations Health Authority's smoked salmon project, which demonstrated the safety and effectiveness of traditional Salish salmon-smoking practices.

For those working in agrology, Jared's presentation offers an important opportunity to consider the relationship between land stewardship, food systems, Indigenous knowledge, and our professional responsibilities.

Agrologists work at the intersection of agriculture, environmental stewardship,

science, and public interest. Understanding the knowledge, cultural practices, and relationships that Indigenous Peoples have maintained with the land for generations can broaden our perspectives and encourage more thoughtful, respectful approaches to professional practice.

We are honoured to have Jared share his knowledge and experiences with us and look forward to the conversations his presentation will inspire.

Jared's keynote is only the start of what promises to be an engaging day.

While the event is virtual, we've designed the day to be much more than simply sitting in front of a screen. We want registrants to connect, exchange ideas, ask questions, and enjoy the experience of learning together.

Spaces are still available, so now is the time to book your spot! Visit the BCIA Symposium 2026 registration page to register. We look forward to seeing you online on October 30 for a day of learning, connection, and inspiration as we explore what it means to be a professional in a changing world!



BCIA 2026
Symposium
"Professional practice in a changing world"

Where Professional Practice Intersects:

Navigating the Complexity

Imagine an agrologist being approached to take on a new project. At first glance, the work appears to fall within their area of expertise, but as the details emerge, it becomes clear that some aspects may intersect with the practice of other regulated professionals. Perhaps the project involves ecological restoration, water management, or land-use planning, where several professions may bring relevant expertise and share or hold distinct professional responsibilities.

Of course, BCIA registrants don't have to imagine these scenarios. For many, navigating the intersections between professional practice areas is a regular part of their work. As reflected in our Boots on the Ground article in this edition, professionals working in the field are often adept at navigating these complexities, drawing on their experience,

professional judgment, and the expertise of others. But that doesn't mean the decisions are always straightforward, or that the lines between professional responsibilities are always clear.

Situations like these require professionals to look beyond the immediate technical work and consider some important questions.

- What is the full scope and purpose of the project?
- Does the professional have the education, experience, and competence to undertake the work?
- Are there aspects that may fall within another profession's reserved practice?
- Would collaboration with another qualified professional be appropriate or necessary?

These questions are not always easily answered. While the *Professional Governance Act* (PGA) and its associated regulations establish the legislative framework for professional practice, applying those requirements to complex, real-world projects can require careful consideration. Professional practice rarely fits within clearly defined boundaries, and areas of overlapping or intersecting expertise can create uncertainty about professional responsibilities.

This is where professional judgment becomes particularly important.

Integrity, objectivity, competence, and accountability are fundamental to professional practice and should guide how professionals assess their responsibilities when navigating these intersections. Recognizing the limits of one's own expertise is not a weakness; it is an essential part of competent and ethical practice.

Depending on the circumstances, the appropriate approach may involve seeking advice, collaborating with other qualified professionals, adjusting the scope of an engagement, or referring aspects of the work elsewhere. In some cases, difficult decisions may be necessary to ensure that professional obligations and the [BCIA Code of Ethics](#) are upheld.

These considerations go beyond determining which professional is authorized to undertake a particular activity. They are also about ensuring that the right expertise is brought to a project, that professional responsibilities are understood, and that risks to the public and the environment are appropriately managed.

Providing greater clarity and support in navigating these intersections is an important strategic priority for BCIA. As part of our ongoing work to strengthen professional practice standards and guidance, BCIA is working to clarify practice areas and develop practical resources to support registrants in understanding their professional responsibilities, recognizing areas of overlapping practice, and making informed decisions.

But these aren't conversations that any one regulator can have in isolation. At BCIA's October 30 symposium, a panel discussion on *Navigating Interdisciplinary Practice* will bring together the professional practice leads from BCIA, Engineers and Geoscientists BC (EGBC), Forest Professionals BC (FPBC), and the College of Applied Biologists (CAB). Together, they will explore the challenges and opportunities that arise where professional practice areas intersect, and how regulators can better support professionals working in these shared spaces.

The symposium is one opportunity to advance this important dialogue, but certainly not the last. More information, including new tools and guidance to support registrants in navigating these complex questions, will be shared as BCIA's work progresses.

Ultimately, effective professional practice is about ensuring that the right knowledge, skills, and professional judgment are brought to bear on the challenges at hand, with public protection remaining at the centre of every decision.

Looking Ahead to 2027:

What's Changing with Registration Renewal and Fees?

As BCIA prepares for the 2027 registration year, there are some important changes to renewal timelines and the fee structure that registrants should be aware of.

While annual renewal is a familiar process, it serves an important regulatory purpose. Beyond maintaining registration, the process helps BCIA confirm that registrants continue to meet their professional obligations, including professional development, ethical responsibilities, and accurate practice information. Registration fees also enable BCIA's to meet its obligations under the *Professional Governance Act* (PGA), regulating the profession in the public interest.

For 2027, the BCIA Board has approved updates to the fee structure and renewal

process, including adjustments intended to support sustainable regulatory operations, simplify administration, and encourage timely progression through the Articling Program.

2027 Renewal: Key Dates and Fees

Renewal period opens:

Mid-November 2026

Deadline to renew without late fees:

January 15, 2027

Final deadline to renew with applicable late fees: February 15, 2027

Annual PAg/TAg fee: \$740

Annual AAg/ATAg fee: \$680

An important change for 2027: The final renewal deadline has moved from March 1 to February 15. Registrants who renew by January 15 will avoid late fees. Renewals completed between January 16 and February 15 will be subject to applicable late fee(s).

Registrants who have not renewed by February 15 will be removed from the register and will not be able to continue to practice. Any individual wishing to return to practice after that date must submit a request for reinstatement and pay all applicable fees. If reinstatement is not completed within three (3) years of leaving BCIA, the individual will be required to submit a new application for registration and satisfy the registration requirements in effect at that time.

Registrants are encouraged to renew early to avoid additional fee(s) and any interruption to their registration.

Changes to the Fee Structure

In addition to the annual fee adjustment, two other changes are worth highlighting.

Simplified prorated fees: BCIA is moving from a quarterly to a half-year prorated fee structure for individuals who register partway through the year. This change reduces administrative complexity while continuing to recognize that not all registrants enter the profession at the beginning of the registration year.

Articling Extension Fee: The Articling Extension Fee will increase from \$60 to \$150 and will now apply at the renewal period following completion of two years in articling status, rather than three.

Articling is intended to be a transitional period during which registrants develop and demonstrate the competencies necessary to advance to full professional status. This change reinforces that purpose and encourages timely completion of articling requirements. Alongside the removal of mandatory branch-related activities and the introduction of BCIA's online Ethics Course, these updates are intended to support a more streamlined pathway to full registration.

Planning Ahead

Full details of the 2027 fees, including those for other registration categories, will be available in BCIA's [Fee Schedule](#). Additional information about the fee changes and their rationale can be found in the [Fee Increase FAQ](#).

Renewal invoices and receipts will be accessible through the BCIA registrant portal, with further reminders and instructions shared as the renewal period approaches.

These changes are part of BCIA's ongoing efforts to maintain effective, sustainable regulatory processes while supporting registrants in meeting their professional obligations.



