

Agrologist vs Agronomist: The Same or Different?

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The terms “agrologist” and “agronomist” are often confused largely due to similarities in spelling and pronunciation. The functions carried out by an agronomist fall within the definition of agrology in *The Agrologist Act, 1994*. The term “agrologist” and “agronomist” may not be fully interchangeable but the use of the term “agronomist” is likely to lead a member of the public to think they are dealing with a registered agrologist.

The profession of **agrology** refers to the application of scientific principles to agriculture. This is defined by legislation and is regulated as a profession in the same manner as accountants, doctors, engineers and lawyers. Registration as a regulated professional not only protects the public interest, but also protects the individuals that are practicing – and their employers.

Agronomy is a field of study within the profession of agrology. Agronomists study elements of crop and soil science, and apply scientific knowledge specifically to crop production and soil management. Those working in agronomy belong to the profession of agrology and are called **agrologists**.

DEFINING THE PROFESSION OF AGROLOGY

Legally, because agronomy is a field of study within agrology, anyone who claims to be an agronomist must be qualified and registered with the Institute of Agrologists and hold the designations of Agricultural Technologist (AT) or Professional Agrologist (PAg). Those practicing agrology without a license are subject to prosecution under the provision of *The Agrologists Act, 1994* in the same manner as accountants, doctors, engineers and lawyers who practice without a licence.



HISTORY OF “AGROLOGY” AND “AGROLOGISTS”

The profession of agrology started in Quebec in 1937. Saskatchewan was the next province to pass legislation, in 1946, requiring that only those trained and qualified in the application of science to agriculture are allowed to teach, transfer knowledge or conduct research in agriculture. The reason for the legislation was to protect the public (farmers and consumers) and the safety of the food system from those giving advice without adequate training and qualifications.

The term “agrology” was coined in 1946 by Professor J.B. Harrington, a professor at the U of S College of Agriculture. It came from the Greek words “*agros*” for land and farmer, and “*logist*” for scientific. The name quickly gained acceptance and was widely adopted across Canada as other provinces soon passed the same legislation to protect the public interest.

AGROLOGY TODAY

In Canada, agrology is a regulated profession in all ten provinces with over 10,000 agrologists practicing in many areas of agriculture, bioresources food and the environment.

More information can be obtained from the Provincial Office at 306-242-2606, our website at www.sia.sk.ca or by email at info@sia.sk.ca.

Is your Advisor an Agricultural Technologist (AT) or a Professional Agrologist (PAg)?