

A Brief History

The Canadian Society for Bioengineering (CSBE) / La Société Canadienne de Génie Agroalimentaire et de Bioingénierie (SCGAB) was founded in 1958 in Guelph Ontario under the title of the Canadian Society of Agricultural Engineering (CSAE)/ La société canadienne de génie agroalimentaire et biologique (SCGR). The Society functioned as an affiliated society of the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC) from 1958 until 1987. In 1987, the Society decided to sever its formal ties as an affiliated society of AIC and to establish a formal partnership with the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE). In 2004 the CSAE changed its name to its present name CSBE/SCGAB. The Society has over 700 members in Canada and in other countries.

Our history could be tied to several eras as follows: 1925- 1949 represents the formative years; 1950- 65 was the birth of the modern era; 1966- 1980 was the rapid growth period during which Canadian agriculture and Agricultural Engineering expanded rapidly; and 1981 to the present time represents a period of re-adjustment and change.

Historically Agricultural Engineering has made very significant contributions to many important developments in agriculture. Some of the highlights include livestock housing systems, crop storage facilities, horticultural crop equipment, conservation tillage equipment, remote guidance systems, remote sensors and robotics. All of these contributions have had a profound effect on the viability and efficiency of the agri-food industry in Canada.

The University of Saskatchewan granted the first university degree in Agricultural Engineering in 1925. This represents the formal beginnings of the profession in Canada. It is worth noting, however, that various forms of training and non-degree programs were offered several years prior to 1925 in several universities.

Accredited programs in Agricultural Engineering have been offered at eight universities, at different times, and with various names. There are currently four universities offering accredited programs in Bioresource/Agricultural engineering (Manitoba, Nova Scotia, McGill, Laval). Other universities (Guelph, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia) offer programs in related areas of bioresource and environmental engineering related to agriculture.