

Building a National, Multidisciplinary Effort for Circular Bioeconomy Systems

Erin Webb

September 2025

The Circular Bioeconomy Systems Institute (CBSI) was established to unite diverse stakeholders committed to creating sustainable, circular pathways for agricultural and forest resources. Initiated within the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE), CBSI aims to become a catalyst for cross-sector collaboration spanning universities, industry, non-profits, and professional societies. This talk will trace CBSI's evolution from a member-driven initiative to its current efforts to launch the Circular Bioeconomy Systems Network (CBSN). At the core of CBSI's mission is a system-of-systems philosophy—recognizing that circularity requires connecting the full value chain of agriculture, forestry, and bio-based industries. Convening such a multidisciplinary community has meant overcoming challenges in governance, communication, and funding, while also building shared identity, strong partnerships, and new standards and metrics. This presentation will highlight lessons learned from CBSI's journey, what has worked, what obstacles remain, and how a national, multidisciplinary, systems-oriented approach can accelerate innovation in the bioeconomy.