The Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation (IUNG) was founded in 1950. A tradition of agricultural research in Pulawy, however, goes back to the year 1862, when the Polytechnic Institute of Agriculture and Forestry was here established. The IUNG is also heir to the State Research Institute of Rural Husbandry (PINGW) that was seated in Pulawy in the years 1917-1950.

The Institute employs 320 persons, including: 28 professors and 75 doctors.

The areas of research are: soil science, fertilization, tillage, cultivation of cereals and fodder plants, biomass production for energy purposes, farming and the cultivation of hops and tobacco, selected issues of agricultural phytochemistry and microbiology, the assessment of different management systems, weed regulation in agricultural crops, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and bio-economy. Research works are carried out in 11 scientific departments and 8 Agricultural Experimental Stations, located in different regions of Poland. AESs run agricultural production under different soil and climate as well as economical and organizational conditions. At the same time, they put current organizational and technological solutions offered by science into practice.

IUNG’s activity is clearly focused on the problems of sustainable development of agricultural production, shaping of the agricultural environment and supporting the decisions of the administrative and local government authorities. Through its activities, the Institute helps to increase innovation and competitiveness of Polish agriculture. It cooperates with farm advisory centers, universities and agricultural schools.

The integrated information system for the agricultural areas used by IUNG-PIB shows a large representativeness and allows for using of a series of numeric maps of different scale and territorial range, useful for the management of agricultural space.

In the years 2011-2015, the Institute implemented a long-term program entitled "Supporting activities for shaping agricultural and environmental sustainability of agricultural production in Poland", established by the Polish Council of Ministers.
Currently, IUNG-PIB implements a long-term program under the name of "Supporting activities for the conservation and rational use of agricultural production space in Poland and for shaping the quality of plant raw materials" set up for the period 2016-2020 under Resolution 223/2015 of the Polish Council of Ministers of 15 December 2015.

IUNG-PIB is also the coordinator of the program: "Increased use of domestic feed protein for the production of high-quality animal products under the conditions of sustainable development", established for the period 2016-2020. In addition, the employees of the Institute participate in the implementation of the multiannual program concerning biological progress and conservation of soil resources, co-ordinated by the Institute of Plant Breeding and Acclimatization–State Research Institute in Radzików.

The Institute has a modern laboratory base, including the Innovation and Scientific Center for Agricultural Research, released for use in 2015, which houses all the IUNG’s laboratories and modern apparatus. It is authorized to evaluate and issue opinions on all fertilizers and nutrients entering the market.

Of great practical importance are the monitoring systems of the state of soil and water as well as the system of Agricultural Droug Monitoring, developed on the order of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The research results of IUNG PIB support the activities of the Polish Council of Ministers, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, local and administrative authorities, advisory centers, farmers and agricultural enterprises.

The Institute cooperates with fertilization industry under the Competence Centre of Zakłady Azotowe S.A. It also runs a large, multi-directional foreign cooperation in all spheres of research interests, and participates in international projects.