# Integrating Mechatronics in Agricultural Engineering: Advancing Modern Farming

Ajay Kumar Choubey
*Professor & Mentor (R&D), Mittal Institute of Technology, Bhopal, India*
*Author email: a1ja1y@yahoo.co.in*

**ABSTRACT -** Mechatronics is an interdisciplinary field that integrates mechanical, electrical, electronic, and computer technologies, fostering innovation across diverse domains such as automobiles, robotics, and automation systems. This paper explores the evolution and applications of Mechatronics, focusing on its role in the design and implementation of advanced models. The study begins with an overview of the history and foundational concepts of Mechatronics, introducing key terminologies and principles. It then delves into the development of Mechatronics-based systems, including Computer - Aided Design (CAD), Automated Guided Vehicles (AGVs), walking robots, and automation technologies. Additionally, the paper highlights critical design considerations for Mechatronic systems and examines the significant synergy between Mechatronics and agricultural engineering, showcasing how it revolutionizes modern farming practices.

***Keywords:*** *AGV, Automation, Briquetting Plant, CAD, Mechatronics.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Mechatronics is a multidisciplinary field that integrates microelectronics with mechanical engineering, enabling the seamless combination of mechanical and electronic systems with information technology. This synergy allows for the development of advanced, functionally cohesive systems (Histand, 1996; Acar, 1993). The term 'Mechatronics' refers to a synergistic combination of precision engineering, electronic control and systems thinking in the design of products and manufacturing processes. It is an interdisciplinary subject that both draws on the constituent disciplines and includes subjects not normally associated with one of the above. Development Advisory Committee of the European Union, (IRDAC, 1986) has formulated a general accepted definition of Mechatronics. Many technical processes and products in the area of mechanical and electrical engineering show an increasing integration of mechanics with electronics and information processing. This integration is between the components (hardware) and the information-driven function (software), resulting in integrated systems called mechatronic systems. Essentially, Mechatronics is the concept of working smarter – not harder – and to inexpensively get the most done in as little time as possible. The term can be defined in many dDifferent ways, but functionally, it is a blend of mechanics and the synergistic use of precision engineering, control theory, computer science, and finally sensor and actuator technology – all designed to improve products and processes.

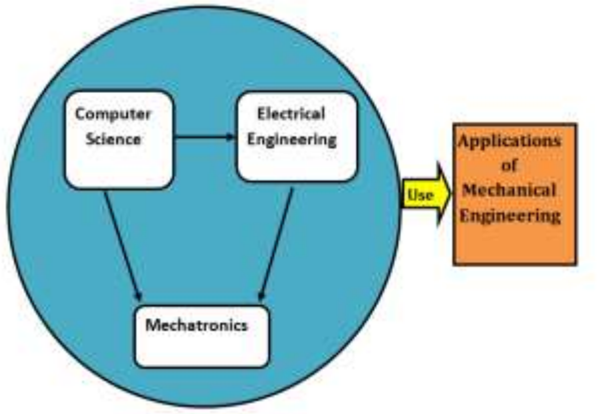


Fig. 1: Mechatronics Streams

### *1.1 Component of Mechatronics:*

Mechatronics encompasses a diverse range of disciplines, including:

- **Electric Devices & Electrical Drives**: Understanding and application of electrical components and motor systems.
- **Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC)**: Development and programming of automation systems.
- **Electronics & Sensors**: Integration of sensor technology for data acquisition and control.
- **Control Systems & Simulation**: Designing and simulating feedback systems for precise operation.
- **Mechanical System Modeling**: Analyzing and creating models of mechanical systems for efficient design and functionality.

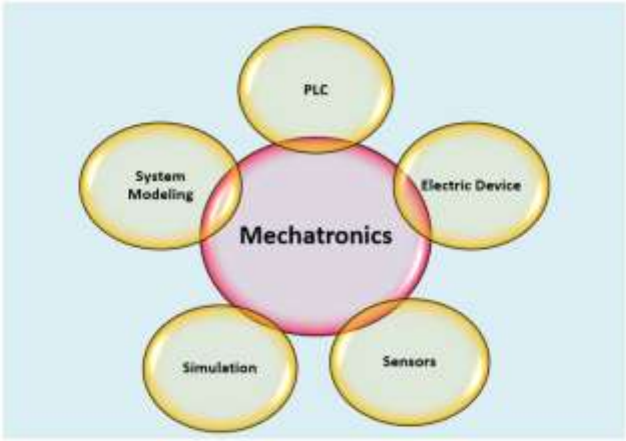


Fig. 2: Component of Mechatronics

### *1.2 History of Mechatronics –*

When the term "Mechatronics" first emerged nearly 40 years ago, it was an unfamiliar concept to most. It was introduced in the 1970s by Tetsuro Mori, a senior engineer at Yaskawa Electric Corp. in Japan, aiming to describe the integration of electrical motors controlled by computers. This groundbreaking concept combined mechanical and electronic systems to enhance automation and control. Initially, the adoption of Mechatronics progressed faster in Japan than in Western countries, where the field's definition and recognition evolved more gradually (Acar, 1993). Yaskawa, known for pioneering innovative terms since the 1950s, initially trademarked "Mechatronics" in 1970 and gained rights to it in 1973. The term, a fusion of "mechanics" and "electronics," complemented the company's earlier creations like "mochintrol" (motor, machine, and control), which described electrical actuators controlling mechanical arms and fingers. Despite its potential, the concept of Mechatronics remained underutilized during its early years as it was ahead of its time. Recognizing the need for industry-wide innovation, Yaskawa chose not to renew its trademark in the 1980s, allowing the term to be freely used, fostering research and development globally.

Mechatronics evolved significantly over the decades:

- **1970s**: Focused on servo technology, enabling innovations like automatic door openers and auto-focus cameras.
- **1980s**: Integrated microprocessors into mechanical systems for improved performance, exemplified by anti-lock braking systems and electric seats.
- **1990s**: Centered on communication technologies, enabling large-scale networked systems like airbag deployment mechanisms.

Modern Mechatronics incorporates advanced control systems, such as **relay logic applications** for industrial automation, where motors are controlled using contactors, relays, and sensors. The introduction of **Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs)** has revolutionized control operations by managing input and output processes in applications like robotics. Sensors, essential in both open and closed-loop control systems, play a critical role in acquiring and transmitting data for automation. These components enable precise monitoring and control of production processes, making Mechatronics indispensable in industries today. Mechatronics represents a synergy of mechanics, electronics, and information technology, driving innovations that continue to shape modern engineering and industrial automation.

## II. DEVELOPMENT OF MODEL BY MECHTRONICS

Michal Kelemen et al. discussed the construction of a functional reduced didactic lift model developed for educational purposes. The lift model's overall arrangement was designed using CAD systems, with specific components and mechanisms tailored to fulfill particular lift functions. The model comprises four floors, which are sufficient to replicate the operational phases of a standard lift system. An "active traveler" on any floor can initiate a lift call through the control panel. The cabin is equipped with interior lighting, activated only when a passenger is present. The model includes safety elements to prevent user injuries caused by improper operation. Additionally, an optoelectronic sensor detects passenger presence in the door area; if passengers or objects are detected, the doors remain open.

Ramamoorthy et al. proposed a generic, innovative methodology for software-based mechatronic systems designed to help manufacturing organizations improve performance, significantly reduce experimental and internal costs, and shorten product lead times.

Hong Wong et al. presented an approach for remote position control of a DC motor experimental setup via the Internet. The setup features an embedded server microcontroller interfaced with the motor. A remote client computer communicates with the server, allowing interaction with the motor. Using an Ethernet connection, the remote client uploads and executes Java-based programs on the server microcontroller. The client communicates through a Java applet, which provides a graphical user interface (GUI) to interact with the motor. The GUI includes a slider to control motor positions between -100° and 100°, text input boxes for adjusting position control parameters in real time, and a plot displaying the motor's current position using sensor data.

Hongtei Eric Tseng et al. addressed challenges in improving vehicle stability control systems. Key topics included driver intent recognition, vehicle status measurement and estimation, control target generation, system actuation efficiency, road bank angle detection, system development and evaluation, and fault detection.

This refined version improves clarity and readability while maintaining technical accuracy.

***2.1 Automation of Transportation:***

'Automation' refers to the transfer of human control functions to technical systems, with the goal of enhancing productivity, improving the quality of end products, optimizing energy and raw material usage, ensuring safer working conditions, and saving time.

***2.1.1 AGV (Automated Guided Vehicle) –***

***(a) What is AGV:***

Automated Guided Vehicles (AGVs) are integral to Mechatronics engineering, combining mechanical and electrical engineering components for effective operation. As noted by John E. Hogan et al., AGV systems are commonly employed in industrial settings to transport materials between locations. These systems comprise vehicles, peripheral and on-site components, and a stationary control system. The vehicles serve as the core element, executing the primary transportation tasks, while the stationary control system manages overarching control functions. Peripheral components interact with the onboard equipment of the vehicles, ensuring seamless system integration and operation [7].

***(b) AGV Development:***

Automated Guided Vehicles (AGVs) are extensively used to autonomously transport materials between assembly stations, often following guide wires or colored strips. In hospitals, some AGVs deliver food and medication by tracking predefined ceiling light positions. In developing countries, while industrial applications of robots are limited due to low labor costs, AGVs provide a viable solution when production speed and accuracy must be maintained, offering a cost-effective automation alternative.

(M. Yakut Ali et al.) developed an AGV system for industrial logistics in developing countries using appropriate technologies. The prototype was created with limited resources, but mass production could reduce costs by importing necessary components. The lightweight, slow-speed robots could easily be modified to meet industry needs. Testing suggested that proximity sensors should replace tactile sensors due to their longer expected lifespan.

(Alonzo Kelly et al.) developed an infrastructure-free AGV that uses four vision systems. Three of these systems rely on naturally occurring visual cues instead of physical infrastructure. By pairing these vision systems with a robust trajectory generation algorithm, the AGV can navigate autonomously in various contexts.

(U. A. Umar et al.) proposed a priority-based genetic algorithm for AGV routing. The algorithm aims to minimize path traversal time, using weight mapping crossover (WMX) and insertion mutation as genetic operators. It includes conflict detection and avoidance through node and arc occupation time mapping, ensuring faultless navigation.

(Suthep Butdee et al.) presented a control strategy for AGVs using an inboard PLC, eliminating the need for physical guides. The vehicle has three wheels, with the front wheel for steering and driving, and two rear wheels equipped with encoders. The path is stored in the PLC, and deviation errors between the required and actual paths are corrected by adjusting speed and steering angle. The system uses Kalman Filtering (KF) to estimate position and orientation, ensuring precise navigation. Test results confirmed the effectiveness of the control and localization system, achieving accurate positioning via simulation and experimentation [7-14].

## III. COMPUTER AIDED DESIGN OF MECHATRONICS SYSTEMS

***3.1 How CAD helps Mechatronics:***

An important objective of CAD (*computer aided design*) in mechatronics is the integration of different disciplines by the unification of the design process. This helps to include mutual interactions of subsystems of different nature and to unify the documenting of all actions and results obtained at each stage of the project. [9]

***3.1.1 Tools for modeling, simulation and controller design:***

Simulation can play an important role in the process of designing mechatronic systems. With computer simulation alternative designs can be compared and evaluated without the cost involved with building real prototypes. Simulation tools used in control engineering are mostly based on a block diagram representation of the underlying mathematical model. These models have a direct connection with the transfer functions of the various components of the system.

***3.2 Development of model:***

***(a) Walking robots***

(Florina Moldovan et. al) has presented a general approach to design of walking robot based upon aspects regarding mechatronic environment such as CAD design. The analytic model and simulation of the walking mechanism that is used for building a walking robot structure is also described. The vector loop and simple geometric method are used for studying forward kinematics. The simulation results from CAD and Matlab for the investigated mechanism can be compared with the analytical model presented regarding the forward kinematics. [10]

***(b) Modeling for mechatronics vehicle system***

The vehicle systems are significantly nonlinear, the elements such as tyres, dampers; bump stops can be hardly linearized for their whole workspace. If such typical elements are mentioned, the idea of parametric databases occurs. The databases should contain the basic vehicle substructures, e.g. suspension elements, tyres, which are parameterized. The vehicle systems are usually fully three-dimensional systems, which are designed in CAD packages. There are two consequences of this statement. The vehicles must be modeled as spatial models, however, in some early development phases are reduced models acceptable. Furthermore, it would be helpful, if the mechatronic simulation tools could use the geometrical data, which are already defined in CAD tools. And, if the CAD 3D data are one available, the data can be also used for the final animation of the vehicles. The animation is not just an option for the presentations, but also can help the designed to visualize the overall system behavior in better way than just plots of some states not only to debug the model. [11]

(S. Shivakumar et. al) has explained the integration of CAD, the major areas of product lifecycle. The system consists of four major steps namely creation of CAD model, extraction of feature data from STEP file, turning of parts using generated NC codes and inspection using CMM for validation. [12]

## IV. MECHATRONICS IN THE EVOLUTION OF OUR AGRICULTURE

In the very beginning of agriculture, farmers utilized power from oxen and horses, and would leave the remaining work for manual labor. Technology playing the role of the feeding hand to agriculture in this present era, elements of mechatronics, such as sensors, plays a vital role in our farms of fertilizing, seeding, cropping, cleaning, and monitoring our vegetation. In detail, we can see sensors in use of detecting color, alcohol levels for ripeness, ambient light levels, moisture levels and hazardous levels of chemicals including pesticides. We have also seen different mechanisms, such as robotic arms that cultivate the roots of plants and rotating mechanisms to seed, collect, and clean produce, and to revitalize the soil. [15] Some imp mechatronics considerations - a robot representing the engineering of mechatronics in the collection of crops, ultrasound sensor will be detecting if there is something in front before mechanisms are activated, By attaching an AC drive system with a motor, we can increase/decrease or control the speed, and reduce energy consumption.

**4.1. Mechatronics in Briquetting Plant**

In briquetting plant which establishes at Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering, Bhopal, there is AC Drive (or Electrical drive) controls the speed of screw conveyor motor.

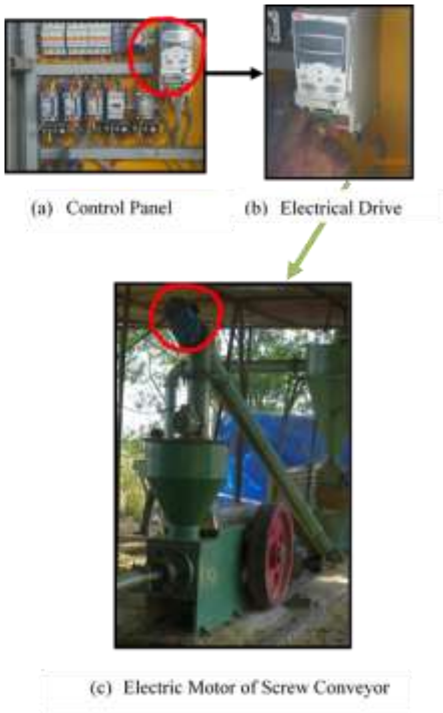


Fig. 3: Electrical Drive System in a Briquetting Plant (Electric Motor Controlled by AC Drive)

By EKTS Software, the rotation of motor in briquetting plant is design.

**4.2 Automated level sensor based vertical fuel feeding bucket conveyer**

Figure 4 illustrates a bucket conveyor installed at the biomass-based power plant in Silari, Udaipur. A bucket-type lift was specifically designed and fabricated for this setup. The system is capable of loading 30–40 kg of biomass within 30 seconds, with 10 seconds allocated for upward movement, 10 seconds stationary at the top of the gasifier to drop the fuel into the reactor, and 10 seconds for downward movement. This feeding mechanism has proven to be more efficient and user-friendly compared to traditional belt conveyors.

Fig. 4: Bucket Conveyer (CIAE Bhopal)

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper highlights mechatronics as a design philosophy that integrates electrical, electronics, computer, and information technology with mechanical engineering through a systems-based approach. The successful implementation of mechatronics in industry depends on the availability of robust support tools, such as modeling and simulation frameworks built on reusable models. Although mechatronics is still a relatively niche field, it has steadily transformed industries, particularly agriculture, by introducing innovative solutions. By enabling precision, efficiency, and sustainability, mechatronics offers farmers advanced tools to enhance productivity while optimizing time and resources. This interdisciplinary field continues to bridge the gap between technology and traditional practices, paving the way for a more efficient and sustainable future in agriculture and beyond.

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