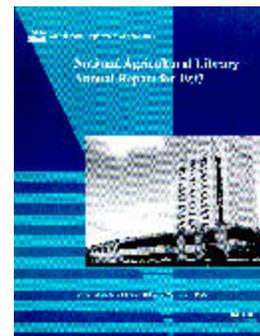


# National Agricultural Library Annual Report for 1997

United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Library  
Beltsville, Maryland, 1998



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## Director's Message

It is hard for me to believe that another year has passed. Taking a few minutes to reflect on the National Agricultural Library's (NAL) many accomplishments over the past 12 months gives me great pleasure. It also reminds me, again, of what a dedicated and hardworking staff we have here.

It's not news to anyone that the advancements in electronic information management are roaring ahead in great leaps and bounds. A person hardly has time to become familiar with one bit of technology before it is replaced by another that is more advanced, more useful. This is a challenging age for those of us in the information management field. It can be frustrating and intimidating as we strive to stay abreast of the new technologies. With the NAL staff, however, all I see is an enthusiasm and zeal for the technology.

But we also must remember why this technology is so important: It helps to provide better access to information, information that in the case of agriculture, can hold the key to life or death. From food safety, animal welfare, and sustainable agriculture to water quality, world trade, and agricultural research, the information NAL endeavors to safeguard while still making it accessible to those who need it, influences the lives of nearly everyone. Just consider some of the serious issues facing the world about which NAL is providing information: *Pfiesteria* in waterways, *E. coli* bacteria, mad cow disease, global warming, El Niño . . . The list goes on and each year seems to grow. And each year NAL rises to the challenge.

NAL staff are not cowed by this critical need for information nor the rush of electronic information advancements. Instead, they grasp each new development and eagerly begin the work of making it serve those in the world who are seeking, perhaps desperately needing, agricultural information. More than a pleasure, it is an honor to work with such enthusiastic, talented people. As you read the *NAL 1997 Annual Report*, you will see what I mean. I'm tremendously proud of the NAL staff and of the library: the priceless collection, our innovations in the field of electronic information technology, our first-rate service.

The *1997 Annual Report* gives one a taste of how, in so many different ways, NAL is playing a vital role in world agriculture.

Pamela Q. J. André

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## General

With over 3.3 million items in its collection, the National Agricultural Library (NAL) is the largest agricultural library in the world. It joins the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, and the National Library of Education as one of four national libraries of the United States.

Established in 1862 as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), today NAL is part of USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS).

NAL's mission is "to ensure and enhance access to agricultural information for a better quality of life." Through its services, programs, and information products, it serves anyone who needs agricultural information, from policymakers and farmers to scientists and students. In 1997, the NAL home page received approximately 4.5 million hits, a strong testament to the worldwide demand for agricultural information and to NAL's worldwide reputation as an agricultural information resource.

## **NAL Celebrates National Library Week with USDA Event**

In an effort to encourage more USDA employees to use NAL, the library hosted 3 days of exhibits and demonstrations of its electronic information systems at the USDA headquarters in Washington, DC, during National Library Week in April 1997. Hundreds of Federal employees visited the exhibit site. The exhibits and demonstrations focused on the wealth of agricultural information available from NAL and on the various methods, both traditional and electronic, by which information can be obtained. The event officially opened with NAL Director Pamela André presenting framed copies of NAL's Thomas Jefferson letters to Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman. In his remarks, Secretary Glickman praised the library's efforts to keep up with the changing informational needs of world agriculture.

## **Hayes Named ARS Librarian of the Year**

Kate Hayes, coordinator of NAL's Technology Transfer Information Center, was named the first ARS Librarian/Information Specialist of the Year. Hayes was cited "for leadership in implementing new approaches to service, effectively responding to customers' needs, and elevating the role of library and information services to the science and technology community."

## **Water Quality Website Wins Blue Ribbon**

The World Wide Web site of NAL's Water Quality Information Center (WQIC) received a Blue Ribbon Award from the American Society of Agricultural Engineers and was listed on the Best Environmental Directories web page of the Centre for Economic and Social Studies for the Environment at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, in Brussels, Belgium. The WQIC website serves as the focal point for customer access to information on agricultural pollution of water sources. The site has provided thousands of customers with links to water-related databases, Internet discussion lists, bibliographies, and other information. WQIC added 60 water quality information sources to the site in 1997 and bibliographies listed on the site were accessed more than 27,000 times.

## **Collection Still Growing**

Despite a flat budget for library materials in FY 1997, the NAL collection increased to over 3.3 million print and nonprint items. During the year, NAL added 32,464 print volumes to the collection through purchase, gift, and exchange and increased the number of nonprint items by 7,127. The number of electronic resources in the online catalog increased by 50 percent, from 638 titles to 972 titles.

In response to the rising cost of library materials and the static budget, the NAL Collection Development Committee reviewed collecting practices in subjects where policy requires a basic collection (such as nonveterinary medical and pharmaceutical sciences). As a result of the review, NAL canceled a number of gift and purchased titles. The committee also approved new selection guidelines for newsletters.

Access to NAL's collection development activities is now available online through the collection development home page . The website includes the text of NAL's Collection Development Policy and all revisions made since publication of the 1988 edition. Also included are NAL's selection guidelines for newsletters, developed in 1997; electronic resources selection activities; and the joint collecting statements on veterinary medicine, biotechnology, and food and nutrition developed with the Library of Congress and National Library of Medicine.

## **Brittle Books Preserved Digitally**

NAL established initial procedures and standards for digital conversion of USDA embrittled-paper publications. During the year, collections of three USDA paper publications were converted to preservation-quality digital format. These included 19 volumes of the *Journal of Agricultural Research*. More than 24,000 pages were digitized, becoming the first publications in NAL's digital archive collection. NAL is working to make these digital images available on the Web.

NAL believes that the outcome of these initial efforts in digital preservation will have a long-term impact on the availability and distribution of agricultural information. Through digital conversion of significant brittle publications, NAL is making endangered materials available to researchers and the public.

## **Retrospective Conversion Entering Fifth Year**

The 5-year contract to convert NAL's card catalog records for monographs into machine-readable form continued with the completion of the fourth option year in FY 1997. The contract calls for the conversion of over 190,000 records. As of the end of FY 1997, over 150,000 records had been converted. ISIS, NAL's online public access catalog, contains more than 640,000 bibliographic records. The addition of the retrospective conversion records will increase the number of records in ISIS by nearly 30 percent. The records also will be added to AGRICOLA, NAL's bibliographic database.

## **NAL Becomes Keeper of USDA History**

In 1996, NAL acquired the USDA History Collection from the former Agricultural and Rural History Section of USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS). This collection was created by ERS as a practical research tool to assist historians, economists, and others interested in the history of USDA. NAL assigned a full-time archivist and three part-time graduate students to process and organize the material so that it is more accessible.

## **National Exhibit Features NAL Materials**

NAL's Special Collections began the year by designing and installing an exhibit entitled "Contributions of Ukrainian Americans to Agriculture of the United States" at the Embassy of Ukraine in Washington, DC. After a 1-month showing at the embassy, the exhibit began a national tour.

## **Visiting Scholar Program Completes Busy Year**

NAL hosted or cosponsored visiting librarians and scholars from several countries in 1997. Assignments ranged from 1 week to several months.

NAL and its parent agency, ARS, sponsored a 3-month visiting librarian assignment to the ARS European Biological Control Laboratory (EBCL) in Montpellier, France. The person selected for the position (from among several candidates) was from New Mexico State University. During his tour in Montpellier, he worked with EBCL scientists and the Center for Biology and Management of Populations-Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) to integrate EBCL biological control research materials into a documentation center that serves the international research community. The center is being located on the Baillarguet International Campus for Biological Control near Montpellier.

Visiting librarians/scholars at NAL during the year included

- An information officer with the Tropical Beef Centre, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Queensland, Australia, who studied NAL's efforts in remote end-user education, including establishing virtual information centers and developing programs to teach NAL users (farmers, scientists, etc.) how to use electronic resources.
- Two library officials from the Universidade de Sao Paulo, Brazil, who learned about the operations of NAL's Rural Information Center, Technology Transfer Information Center, and Alternative Farming Systems Information Center.
- A scientist from the National Center for Gene Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences in Shanghai, China, who worked with NAL plant genome staff.
- A researcher from the Indian National Science Academy in New Delhi, who studied NAL's automation activities.
- A scientist from the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Dehra Dun, India, who studied NAL's use of information technologies.
- The head of Technical Information Projects for the Jamaica Bureau of Standards, who interned with NAL's Food and Nutrition Information Center.
- An agricultural engineer with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Ankara, Turkey, who studied NAL's computerized library and documentation systems.

### **Assistance Offered to Tribal Colleges**

NAL participated in the "USDA and Tribal Colleges Summit" in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The summit was subtitled "A New Partnership, Current Opportunities and Future Possibilities through Learning and Understanding." USDA and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium convened the summit to lay a foundation for partnerships between 1994 land-grant Tribal Colleges and USDA. At the summit, Tribal College presidents, deans, faculty, and students were introduced to USDA resources and programs, including NAL, that support academic programs in the food and agricultural sciences.

### **NAL/Egypt Serve on Advisory Committee**

NAL hosted the summer meeting of the Egyptian National Agricultural Library (ENAL)/National Agricultural Library Joint Committee on Cooperation. The committee provides guidance and coordination to various USDA/Egyptian-supported activities. NAL has worked with the Government of Egypt since 1989 in developing ENAL. At the summer committee meeting, officials from ENAL, NAL, the Egyptian Agricultural Research Center, Cairo University, and ARS met for 4 days to discuss cooperative research activities.

### **Help Extended to Students**

NAL expanded its participation in USDA's student employment programs that target various segments of American youth. The library hosted groups from

- The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Internship Program, a 10-week

paid internship for Hispanic college students.

- The USDA Summer Intern Program, which provides paid summer internships for college students.
- The USDA Research Apprenticeship Program for high school students interested in food and agricultural sciences.
- The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program, which provides 4-year scholarships to high school seniors planning to attend one of the historically black 1890 institutions.

## **NAL Aids Flood-Damaged Colorado Library**

NAL responded to the call for help in rebuilding the flood-damaged collection at Colorado State University (CSU). NAL's Gift and Exchange unit sent surplus monographs and portions of a journal to CSU.

## **Library the Site of Elder Hostel**

As part of its active community involvement program, NAL was the site of an elder hostel for the Collington Episcopal Life Care Community campus (Mitchellville, Maryland) of the Prince George's County (Maryland) Community College. The activities of the elder hostel were part of the Prince George's County Tricentennial Celebration and were centered around the theme "Aviation, Architecture, and Agriculture." Senior participants from throughout the United States came to NAL to discuss and learn about the history of U.S. agriculture and the role of government, including NAL, in advancing the quality of life in the United States through agricultural research.

## **1997 a Banner Year for Special Visitors**

During 1997, NAL hosted more than 500 special visitors interested in the operations of the library. These included USDA administrators, university presidents, foreign dignitaries, visiting scholars, and library directors from throughout the world. Groups included Fulbright, Soros, and Cochrane Fellows, Ministries of Agriculture (Albania, China, Egypt, Russia), the United States Agricultural Information Network, the Federal Library and Information Center Committee, the Bicultural Museum of Texas, the Horticultural Promotional Council, and the Agricultural Women's Leadership Network. Over one-third of the visitors were from foreign countries.

## **Improving Services**

### **Electronic Delivery of Documents Expanded**

NAL continued to encourage its patrons to send requests and receive materials electronically. Part of this effort included providing complimentary copies of Ariel software, with technical support, to over 20 USDA regional offices and to the libraries of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tuskegee University. The Ariel software, produced by Research Libraries Group, facilitates the scanning, transferring, and receiving of documents over the Internet, which reduces the costs and time involved in mailing or telefaxing documents. Through Ariel, documents can be sent directly to a user's workstation anywhere in the world in less than 1 minute.

## **End-Users Trained To Access Electronic Resources**

During the year, NAL worked to phase in its Electronic Media Center (EMC) so that library end users could begin accessing information from NAL electronic resources. NAL increased the number of databases available to its customers from 2 to 30. Eleven networked databases also became accessible to customers at the NAL DC Reference Center in Washington, DC. The EMC has seven customer-dedicated computers and network printers. Also, NAL upgraded five customer computer terminals near the NAL reference desk. These terminals were also integrated with EMC services. NAL customers can now access, on demand, all 30 databases, 7 CD-ROM information products, general Internet-based services, electronic Federal depository collections, 45 Web-based full-text electronic scientific journals, and a selection of electronic newspapers.

In addition, via an NAL server, the library provided the ARS National Program Staff with desktop computer access to over 30 databases on agriculture and related sciences. This enables that staff to efficiently and effectively search databases on their own without NAL assistance.

## **Cataloging Policies Revised**

To decrease the backlog of serial titles awaiting cataloging, NAL implemented revised policies for treatment of foreign-language serial titles. All foreign-language serials and English-language serials that have not been received will be given minimum-level cataloging. Currently received English-language serials, including USDA publications, will continue to receive CONSER full-level treatment. NAL is a member of the national Program Cooperative Cataloging (PCC) and participates in various PCC programs (CONSER, BIBCO, and NACO). NAL implemented the recently released PCC core-level cataloging record standard for audiovisual materials after its analysis showed that there would be no loss of important catalog information by doing so.

## **AGRICOLA Sees Significant Growth**

The implementation of minimal-level indexing for selected journals and the addition of indexing input from contractors contributed to an 18-percent increase in the number of indexing records added to NAL's AGRICOLA bibliographic database in FY 1997, compared to FY 1996.

## **Computer Training for NAL Staff Moves into Eighth Year**

The NAL computer training program, which provides NAL staff with hands-on instruction for microcomputer and Internet applications, is heading into its eighth year with an onsite computer instructor. Ten new classes were developed during the year, including: "Introduction to HTML," "Netscape: Bookmarks, AltaVista, and Yahoo!," and "Lotus 5.0 Working with Multiple Worksheets."

Training classes are held regularly for a variety of subjects, ranging from 1-hour sessions to all-day workshops. The training room has 10 student multimedia Pentium workstations and an instructor's workstation networked using Windows for Workgroups and an NT server.

## **NAL Provides Training to USDA Staff**

NAL's proficiency in the use of electronic information systems is being recognized by and put to good use by many USDA agencies and offices. NAL is assisting many USDA programs in improving electronic information skills. The library provided 240 members of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service with general training on using the Internet. NAL also provided training to USDA plant genome researchers in

using molecular biology e-mail to access genome databases. The NAL Reference Section is putting increased emphasis on training onsite NAL users in doing their own database searches.

## **Access to Rare Materials Improved**

NAL's Special Collections Section developed eight new finding aids and processed four important collections during the year. Finding aids direct researchers to specific materials according to their interests and greatly improve access to NAL's manuscript collection. Working on these projects were library graduate students from nearby universities who were completing practicums, an exchange student from Ukraine, and retired USDA employees. The Special Collections Section also worked to improve security controls and the storage environment for NAL's rare materials.

## **Electronic Resources**

### **AgNIC Enhancements Continue**

NAL and its land-grant university partners continued to enhance the services and resources of AgNIC (Agricultural Network Information Center), a virtual information center that provides a focal point to access agriculture-related resources on the Internet. The use of AgNIC continues to grow and plans are under way to expand participation to additional universities and organizations. Three popular components of AgNIC (<http://www.agnic.org>) are:

- AgDB, which describes and links to more than 750 databases, datasets, and information systems.
- AgCAL, an events calendar listing over 1,000 agricultural conferences, meetings, and seminars.
- AgNIC Online Reference Services, through which NAL, Cornell University, Iowa State, the University of Arizona, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln provide online reference assistance in selected subject areas.

In its role as an AgNIC participant, NAL developed a gateway to directories of various subject and geographic-related directories of agriculture information resources on the Internet. NAL also created a searchable database of plant disease announcements of the American Federation of Scientists and, in collaboration with ARS scientists, designed and made available a prototype database of scientific research performed at ARS laboratories in Colorado and Wyoming. Finally, the library developed for AgNIC an ARS sugar beet germplasm database covering research at ARS facilities in Maryland, Michigan, North Dakota, and Colorado.

### **NAL Keeps Website Current and Useful**

The NAL website has become one of the premier electronic sites contacted for agricultural information. During the year, the NAL website recorded over 4.5 million hits.

NAL's website committee constantly works to upgrade the site, linking to more and more agricultural and related information, and adding new information services. For example, NAL officially opened a biofuels home page, which describes ARS ethanol and biodiesel research projects, and lists publications, patents, and

opportunities for technology development. The site also links to other biofuel sites. The new home page is designed to make companies, researchers, and the public aware of ARS biofuels research and USDA energy-related programs. ARS scientists provide research content for the page, while NAL's Technology Transfer Information Center provides technical assistance in designing the page and some additional content.

NAL's Plant Genome Data and Information Center (PGDIC) is working to make key information on the history and breeding of strawberries and beans available on the Internet. For strawberries, PGDIC is collaborating with land-grant university scientists, ARS staff, and the family of noted agricultural researcher Dr. George Darrow to provide Internet access to information on breeding strawberries from ancient times to 1965. The site will connect researchers to past and current information, provide information to help farmers decide on the feasibility of growing strawberries, and perhaps encourage students to pursue careers in agriculture. The site includes links to other research sites including the National Center for Biotechnology Information, the National Library of Medicine, and the National Institutes of Health. Also on the site are lists of resources for educators, researchers and strawberry producers.

PGDIC, in collaboration with the Dry Bean Research Council (DBRC), the Bean Improvement Cooperative and land-grant university scientists, is digitizing research information on beans. The prepared website, which includes 5,000 pages of DBRC materials, was announced and well received at the council's Biennial Conference. Bean researchers expect the site to greatly facilitate access to research materials.

Another example is NAL's Technology Transfer Information Center (TTIC) home page, available through the NAL website. With electronic access to information becoming increasingly important to those working to transfer new technological discoveries to commercial and practical use, TTIC added several new information items in 1997. These include a frequently-asked-questions section, a directory of technology transfer journals and newsletters, and a bibliography on models, methodology, and processes used in technology transfer.

## **ISIS Growing**

ISIS, NAL's integrated library system, grew to include over 1,250,000 bibliographic citations, nearly 600,000 of which are in ISIS's Journal Article Citation Database. The remainder of the citations are in the ISIS online catalog. ISIS includes machine-readable citations from NAL, the U.S. National Arboretum, and ARS regional libraries. ISIS can be accessed via telnet (at the address [opac.nal.usda.gov](http://opac.nal.usda.gov)) or via the ISIS homepage.

## **More CD-ROMs Produced**

During the year, NAL's Imaging and Conversion Unit absorbed the activities formerly conducted under the National Agricultural Text Digitizing Program, producing several new CD-ROMs that contain segments of the NAL collection. NAL also worked with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and with ARS to produce a CD-ROM of the FAO International Conference and Programme for Plant Genetic Resources Country Reports. With funding from the American Society of Agronomy and the American Agricultural Economics Association, NAL also completed the production and dissemination of the fourth in a series of *Agronomy Journal* CD-ROMs and the first CD-ROM of the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. In the future, NAL will publish, both on CD-ROM and via the Internet, a number of prints from NAL's Curtis Botanical Prints Collection.

## **Electronic Capabilities Upgraded**

During 1997, NAL acquired two new servers in support of the library's Electronic Information Initiative. The

servers provide access to a variety of agricultural databases (including NAL's AGRICOLA) and to the library's electronic archiving and publishing programs.

The library also completed the first stage of a multiyear upgrade of its computer network backbone that decreased the congestion on the network and increased its performance. This consisted of installing a backbone switch and converting the network backbone from a hybrid switched and routed environment to a purely switched configuration. NAL also installed and configured the first portion of a completely new dial-up access system for the network. When completed, this will allow seamless connection to all of NAL's network resources regardless of whether the user is onsite or at a remote location.

In other activities, NAL completed the second step of its connection to the computer backbone of ARS's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center and the ARS wide area network. NAL also implemented its Windows NT local area network by installing a complete suite of server-resident applications.

### **NAL Manages Internet Mailing List on Environment**

NAL's Water Quality Information Center (WQIC) began managing Enviro-News, an Internet mailing list of more than 400 worldwide subscribers. WQIC sent over 130 environmental news items to the list's subscribers.

### **Farming Network Benefits From NAL Support**

NAL's Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) provided important technical assistance and administrative support to the Sustainable Agricultural Network (SAN). SAN, a cooperative program of state and Federal Government agencies and private industry, was formed in 1990 to encourage and support the use of sustainable agriculture techniques and practices. In 1996, with AFSIC support, SAN developed interactive publications on its website. Users can now update or add information to certain SAN publications over the Internet. The information is automatically routed via e-mail to SAN members for approval prior to posting.

### **Responding to Agricultural Concerns**

### **National Microfilm Archive Established**

NAL signed a cooperative agreement with Cornell University that names NAL as the national preservation depository and manager for archival microfilm of state and local agricultural literature identified by the U.S. Agricultural Information Network. As a result, NAL began receiving archival microfilm for cataloging and storage in an environmentally controlled space. To ensure compliance with nationally recognized preservation guidelines, NAL uses sophisticated, state-of-the-art equipment to monitor the microfilm storage environment.

### **Electronic Preservation Plans Being Developed**

The year saw NAL take the lead in developing plans to preserve USDA electronic publications. With the growth of the Internet, many USDA agencies have begun publishing exclusively in electronic formats. Preservation and long-term access of many of these publications have become an important issue due to the ephemeral nature of electronic formats. To meet this need, NAL brought together key stakeholders and responsible parties to develop a preservation and access plan for digital USDA publications. NAL, USDA's

Economic Research Service (ERS), the Government Printing Office (GPO), Cornell University, and the Farm Foundation took the first step in a cooperative venture by convening a 2-day national meeting in Washington, DC, to identify the major elements of such a plan.

Among the issues discussed at the conference were the management framework and institutional roles and responsibilities, both within USDA and externally, for the long-term preservation of USDA digital publications; the underlying technological infrastructure and technical document management requirements; the development of long-term retention criteria and processes for USDA digital publications; and the issues of long-term user access to and retrieval of those digital publications.

Based on the results of the meeting, a draft preservation plan was developed that identifies the USDA agencies involved, the resources required, and short-term and long-term actions. NAL will continue to work with USDA agencies, GPO, the National Archives and Records Service, land-grant university libraries, and other agricultural institutions to move this important effort forward.

## **Staff Work on USDA Sustainable Development**

NAL staff are active in USDA's Council on Sustainable Development, either representing the library as members of the council or serving on subcommittees devoted to furthering the council's mission. Established by the Secretary of Agriculture in 1996, the council is the "forum for policy and program development, implementation, and evaluation on issues relating to sustainable development." Sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Working with the council, NAL's Rural Information Center compiled information identifying criteria and indicators of sustainable communities in the United States, while the library's Alternative Farming Systems Information Center and Sustainable Agriculture Network helped the council identify sustainable issues in the field of agriculture.

## ***Pfiesteria* Website Established**

Responding to an outbreak of *Pfiesteria piscicida* in certain east coast waterways in 1997, which resulted in large fish kills and human health concerns, NAL's Water Quality Information Center (WQIC) developed a website on the deadly microorganism. The site links related national information sources and includes a bibliography of *Pfiesteria* materials.

## **Animal Welfare Information in Demand**

During the year, NAL made available the *Compendium of Animal CARE*, a CD-ROM containing 162 documents that relate to the care of animals in research, teaching, and testing. The CD provides, in an easily retrievable format, regulations and guidelines for the care of animals involved in research studies (as regulated under the Animal Welfare Act and Public Health Service requirements). The disc was funded by the National Institutes of Health, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and the American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care. NAL's Animal Welfare Information Center (AWIC) prepared the information for the disc, which was produced by GPO. GPO reported that the CD was a best seller and met the need for making critical information easily available to researchers and educators who use animals in research.

In 1997, AWIC responded to over 2,500 requests for reference services and nearly 25,000 requests for

specific publications. In all, it distributed 38,656 paper copies of animal welfare information items. About 1,200 people a month, from throughout the United States and 30 foreign countries, logged on to the AWIC website. Also during the year, 287 people participated in the AWIC workshop "Meeting the Information Requirements of the Animal Welfare Act."

AWIC staff are involved in a cooperative effort to produce a website that will provide a searchable information resource on alternatives to animal use in research. Working with AWIC on this project are the Johns Hopkins Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing, Proctor and Gamble, the Humane Society of the United States, and the National Institutes of Health.

## **Library Helps Move Technology to Private Sector**

NAL's Technology Transfer Information Center (TTIC) began assisting ARS scientists in identifying companies that may be interested in commercializing ARS-developed technologies. TTIC staff meet with ARS researchers to discuss newly developed technologies and real or potential applications. TTIC then conducts reference searches to identify potential private manufacturers and supplier companies with an interest in the new technologies. ARS and the private enterprise can then begin cooperative interaction on commercializing the technology.

Also, working with ARS and the USDA CO-AgRA (Capitalizing on Opportunities in Agriculture for Rural America) working group, TTIC developed a website that provides one-stop access to USDA research, development, and business opportunities. The site helps private companies and state and local economic development agencies gain access to information on food and fiber research activities, technology development opportunities, as well as other aspects of initiating and promoting business (funding, marketing, and so forth).

## **Library Assistance Sought by American Rivers Group**

The Federal Working Group of the American Heritage Rivers Initiative (AHRI) asked NAL's Rural Information Center (RIC) to assist it in developing and maintaining a website. AHRI, proposed in 1997 by President Clinton, supports efforts by communities along U.S. rivers to spur economic revitalization, protect natural resources and the environment, and preserve the historic and cultural heritages of river communities. Responding to the request for assistance, RIC provided information on AHRI to river communities applying to participate in the initiative. AHRI also asked that RIC serve as the information resource to those communities (up to 10) that will ultimately be selected as American Heritage River Communities. RIC has agreed to fill this role.

## **Site Helps Nutritionists**

NAL's website titled "Healthy School Meals Resource System" (HSMRS) was activated in 1997 to help school nutrition personnel and trainers easily locate appropriate and useful training materials on nutrition. Available on the site are full-text training documents, regulations, menu planning resources, food safety information, links to related websites, and connections to professional chefs participating in school food-service programs. Another part of the site is an e-mail discussion group called "Mealtalk" that links nutrition professionals working in child nutrition programs. Currently, over 775 professionals participate in the discussion group. Mealtalk archives are listed on the site by date, author, and subject. The site helps fulfill the Team Nutrition Initiative of USDA.

NAL's Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) maintains the website titled "Foodborne Illness Education Information Center" of the USDA and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. The site features foodborne illness statistics, government reports, consumer education materials, plans for controlling foodborne illnesses (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points plans) and a Food Safety Index that provides links to other food safety sites. The site also includes a "Foodsafe" electronic discussion group, which as of 1997 has been used by over 900 food safety experts. The site includes archives (maintained by FNIC) of "Foodsafe" discussions.

During the year, FNIC continued working with the Office of Dietary Supplements of the National Institutes of Health in developing a World Wide Web site on dietary supplements. The site will include the International Bibliographic Information on Dietary Supplements (IBIDS) database, which contains citations on dietary supplement research (vitamin, mineral, phytochemical, botanical, and herbal) published in international scientific journals. NIH believes that putting the IBIDS database on the Web will help to improve international nutritional research on dietary supplements.

## **NAL Helps Develop Dietary Guidelines for the Year 2000**

NAL is performing literature searches in support of the effort by the Federal Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) to develop the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* that will be issued in the year 2000. The literature identified by NAL will serve as the background to research on the new guidelines being done by a CNPP advisory panel of nutrition experts. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* provide recommended levels of nutrition and diet for the American public and are used by government and industry to develop regulations, public policy, and nutrition education materials.

## **NAL Works on Federal Telemedicine Project**

NAL's Rural Information Center Health Service is serving on the Federal Joint Working Group on Telemedicine (JWGT), an interagency effort to resolve issues related to the use of telemedicine in underserved areas of the Nation. JWGT proposed various activities to advance the effort in a year-end report to Vice President Gore, who proposed the formation of the group. A website has been established that inventories Federal telemedicine projects and links to related sources.

## **NAL Releases Rural Housing Information**

Federal rural housing information was made available over a website maintained for the Federal Housing Finance Board by NAL's Rural Information Center. The information includes housing and community development case studies and Federal housing program information aimed at rural communities.

## **Tables**

### **Table 1. NAL collections**

<b>Collection item</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>
<b>Growth of printed items</b>		
Monographs	16,214	20,343

Serial volumes	14,085	15,114
Withdrawn volumes	(14)	(2,993)
Net volumes added	30,285	32,464

### Growth of nonprinted items

Microforms	1,048,992	1,061,240
Audio	412	430
Graphic	1,065	1,079
Film and video	2,645	3,153
Electronic information	638	972
Maps	1,283	1,493

### Total items in collections

Total print volumes	2,235,329	2,267,793
Total nonprint items	<u>1,055,035</u>	<u>1,068,367</u>
Total collection	3,290,364	3,336,160
Manuscripts (linear feet)	18,264	18,382

## Table 2. Technical Services activities

Activity	Number of items
Titles cataloged by NAL	15,778
Articles added to AGRICOLA	
Indexed by	
NAL	70,942
Other	<u>2,947</u>
Total	73,889
Abstracts	25,334
Cataloged by	
NAL	15,778
Other	<u>920</u>
Total	16,698
Other cataloging activity	
NACO *headings	1,139
CONSER +records	583
Acquisition funds expended	
Serials, including series	\$1,966,459
Monographs	<u>\$287,986</u>
Total	\$2,254,445

Titles sent to cataloging	
Monographs	9,620
Serial	<u>571</u>
Total	10,191
Serial volumes added	15,114

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\**NACO* = National Coordinated Cataloging Operations.

+*CONSER* = Cooperative On-Line Serials Program.

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### Table 3. Public Services activities

Activity	Number or percentage
Document delivery requests	
Received by NAL	165,577
Filled by NAL	124,081
Filled by borrowing	14,892
Received electronically	66%
Delivered electronically	24%
Source of requests	
USDA	60%
Non-USDA	40%

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### Table 4. Information Systems activities

Activity	Number of items
AGRICOLA	
Total records	78,047
Records to AGRIS	36,604
Current Awareness Literature Service	
Users	1,166
Number of profiles	11,760
Times used	206,345

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### NAL Electronic Addresses

Agricultural Network Information Center (being developed by NAL)

[agnic@agnic.org](mailto:agnic@agnic.org)

Alternative farming systems

[nalafsic@nal.usda.gov](mailto:nalafsic@nal.usda.gov)

Animal welfare information  
Availability from NAL of specific titles and NAL lending policy  
Education Programs Unit, which handles tours and demonstrations  
of NAL systems  
Food and nutrition information  
Gift and exchange information  
Interlibrary loan or document delivery requests  
NAL's branch at USDA headquarters in Washington, DC  
News media inquiries on NAL  
Plant genome information  
Reference services  
Rural development and rural health information  
Special Collections Section, which handles rare books and  
collections of research materials of noted agriculturalists  
Technology transfer of new agricultural technology from the  
Federal Government to private enterprise  
Water quality information

[awic@nal.usda.gov](mailto:awic@nal.usda.gov)  
[circinfo@nal.usda.gov](mailto:circinfo@nal.usda.gov)

[epu@nal.usda.gov](mailto:epu@nal.usda.gov)

[fnic@nal.usda.gov](mailto:fnic@nal.usda.gov)  
[giftexch@nal.usda.gov](mailto:giftexch@nal.usda.gov)

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