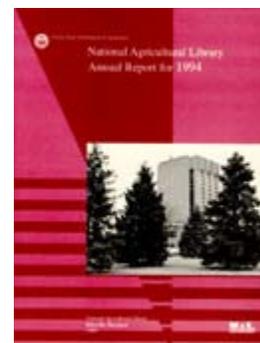


# National Agricultural Library Annual Report for 1994

United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Library  
Beltsville, Maryland, 1995



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## **Director's Message**

Nineteen hundred and ninety-four was an exciting year for me and a very eventful one for the library. Throughout the year I served as the acting director of the National Agricultural Library, stepping in when Joe Howard retired on February 3, 1994. In November 1994, I was officially named the new NAL director. I am very pleased to have been selected for this prestigious position, and I look forward to leading the library during this era of rapid change for the library and the information community. I envision a progressive and exciting future for NAL and the world of agriculture, of which we are such an important part.

Many in the field of agricultural information look to NAL to guide agricultural libraries into the electronic age. The NAL staff and I relish this opportunity. We have grasped the challenge and will endeavor to provide well-reasoned, enthusiastic leadership. We are working in that direction already.

Throughout 1994, members of the NAL staff participated in strategic planning for the library that helped us focus our vision for NAL's future. Not too surprisingly, for us the future is dominated by the issues related to electronic information management. NAL has committed itself to mastering these issues so that agricultural information from throughout the world can be effectively utilized. The electronic information age that we are experiencing will improve world agriculture by making information available to all who need it, from the

consumer to the farmer to the research scientist.

In this era of change, 1994 has brought a major organizational change to NAL. With the recent USDA reorganization, NAL is now part of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Throughout NAL's 125-year existence, serving USDA scientists and researchers has been an important part of the library's mission. As a full member of the ARS community, NAL will continue to provide the very best service to USDA scientists while meeting our responsibilities to the agricultural community throughout the Nation and the world. This reorganization will strengthen our ability to serve the agricultural community.

I am proud of the work of the National Agricultural Library and foresee a future of continuing challenge and achievement.

Pamela Q.J. André  
Beltsville, Maryland

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## **National Agricultural Library**

The National Agricultural Library (NAL) is one of the three U.S. national libraries, with the Library of Congress and the National Library of Medicine. It is the largest agricultural library in the world and is part of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The library is viewed nationally and internationally as the premiere world resource for agricultural information. It is NAL's role to gather, maintain, and make accessible that information. NAL users include Federal, State, and local government scientists and officials; farmers; professors, researchers, and students at universities and colleges; private scientific and agricultural organizations; business leaders; the news media; the general public; and, more and more in recent years, foreign agricultural organizations.

The library is located in Beltsville, MD, and is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.

NAL was established in 1862 as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture under legislation signed by President Abraham Lincoln. That legislation, the Organic Act of 1862, set a mission "to acquire and to diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture...." The act further placed upon the Secretary of Agriculture the responsibility to "procure and preserve all information concerning agriculture...."

From that beginning until 1969, NAL was located at USDA Headquarters in Washington, DC. In 1969, the library moved to its current home in Beltsville, MD, on the grounds of USDA's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center.

The library's collection totals nearly 2.2 million volumes located on 48 miles of bookshelves on 14 floors. But the collection is not only books--it is also journals; audiovisual materials such as photographs, films, slides, and posters; research reports and theses; maps; patents; computer software and laser discs; and artifacts. The library receives about 22,000 periodicals each year.

NAL has items dating back to the seventeenth century and in 75 different languages. The collection grows by about 20,000 volumes each year.

Access to the NAL collection is provided through AGRICOLA, the library's bibliographic database. AGRICOLA, which stands for AGRICultural OnLine Access, is available online (DIALOG) or on compact disc (Silver Platter) and contains over 3 million citations to agricultural literature. It is used by agricultural researchers worldwide. NAL, aided by the land-grant university community, adds thousands of records to AGRICOLA annually. NAL is working to make AGRICOLA available over the Internet.

NAL's staff of about 210 people includes librarians and information and computer specialists. A number of the staff work at 11 specialized information centers established by the library. The centers provide information services in areas of particular concern to world agriculture. Subjects covered by these information centers are agricultural trade and marketing, alternative farming systems, animal welfare, aquaculture, biotechnology, food and nutrition, plant genome, rural development and health, technology transfer, water quality, and youth development. The centers provide customized information services ranging from responding to reference requests and developing publications to coordinating outreach activities and establishing information dissemination networks.

As the designated U.S. center for the international agricultural information system of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), NAL is active in enhancing global access to agricultural information.

In recent years, NAL has participated in a series of conferences and workshops with agricultural libraries in central and eastern Europe and Latin America. These activities are aimed at improving access to agricultural information produced in emerging regions. Also, NAL has helped foreign countries develop their own library and information systems.

The 1990 Farm Bill designated NAL as the primary agricultural information resource of the United States, formally recognizing NAL's responsibility to the public, private, and international agricultural information communities as well as to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Farm Bill also broadened the library's responsibility in the research and education communities, directing NAL to work with public and private libraries and information centers in developing an agricultural library and information network.

One of the ways NAL is meeting that responsibility is through planning for an Agricultural Network Information Center (AgNIC). Working with USDA's Extension Service, Iowa State University, Cornell University, the National Science Foundation, and network service providers, NAL envisions AgNIC as an electronic source of agricultural information that will be available over the Internet. While AgNIC is still in its infancy, NAL and other participants nonetheless have high expectations that it will become a key means for enhancing access to agricultural information. Also related to network building, NAL is the coordinator and primary resource for a nationwide network of State land-grant university libraries and USDA research libraries. Together, NAL and these libraries form a document delivery service network that allows interlibrary loan of agricultural materials nationwide.

NAL also works cooperatively with land-grant university libraries in using electronic technology to improve access to the nation's agricultural knowledge. The technology also helps in the library's ongoing efforts to preserve older, rapidly deteriorating agricultural materials. This technology includes CD-ROM's, laser discs, computer networks, and optical scanning.

One cooperative program using this technology is the National Agricultural Text Digitizing Program.

Working with the land-grant universities since 1986, NAL has electronically scanned material on key agricultural subjects and placed it on compact discs. These discs have been distributed throughout the land-grant system and to other locations worldwide. This is a significant step toward NAL's goal of becoming an "electronic library"--an institution that can provide access to information, regardless of location, through computers and telecommunications technology.

Subjects covered on the discs produced under this program include aquaculture, acid rain, Agent Orange, home landscaping, and selected materials from the papers of George Washington Carver. NAL also worked closely with the American Society of Agronomy in producing a disc containing issues of the Agronomy Journal dating from 1907 to 1924. Other discs are in the works.

Another example of the use of technology in improving access to agricultural materials is NAL's use of optical discs. NAL has placed over 50,000 photographs and images from the collections of the Forest Service and the Photography Division of USDA's Office of Communications on two 12-inch laser videodiscs. Specific photographs can be located in seconds through computer software that allows keyword searching.

NAL has established software demonstration centers that hold hundreds of software programs on food and nutrition and other areas of agriculture. The centers allow NAL users to review and evaluate the computer software.

ISIS (Integrated System for Information Services), a minicomputer-based integrated library system, is another of the vehicles NAL uses to provide access to and manage the NAL collection. Activities performed through this system include acquisition of materials for the collection; serial, authority, and item control; indexing; and production of the AGRICOLA sale tapes. The databases through which these activities are performed are the NAL online catalog and the Journal Article Citation database.

NAL's online catalog is updated daily and contains current bibliographic citations of books, reports, maps, journals and other periodicals, audiovisuals, CD-ROM's and other electronic media, and other materials added to the collection. It also serves as an agricultural union catalog that includes citations for materials at the U.S. National Arboretum Library, NAL's Washington, DC, reference center, and five USDA regional research center libraries. NAL adds records from cooperating libraries on an ongoing basis.

The Journal Article Citations database is also updated daily and consists of citations reflecting articles in journals and other periodicals, book chapters, reprints, and other specialized materials indexed by NAL. This database is a subset of AGRICOLA in that AGRICOLA citations from January 1989 to the present are included. The Journal Article Citations database is the most current source of AGRICOLA records.

In 1986, NAL contracted with the Virginia Tech Library System (VTLS) to provide these ISIS capabilities. In 1992, the contract was renegotiated and VTLS remained the source of the integrated library software. In addition to adhering to national library standards, VTLS software supports standard searches by author, title, call number, subject heading, keyword, and basic boolean logics.

## **NAL Merges With Agricultural Research Service**

NAL was merged into USDA's Agricultural Research Service as part of the total reorganization of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, approved by Congress and signed by the President in October 1994. The reorganization took effect on December 1, 1994. NAL remains a national library and retains its organizational

identity. Within the Agricultural Research Service, the NAL Director, Pam André, reports to the ARS Administrator, R. Dean Plowman, and participates in the ARS Administrator's Council. In the USDA reorganization, ARS is part of Research, Education, and Economics.

## **André Becomes New Director**

Pamela André, formerly NAL's associate director for automation, was named the new director of the National Agricultural Library, replacing Joseph H. Howard, who retired on February 3, 1994. André's appointment came on November 14, 1994. She had served as acting director of the library since Howard's retirement.

André has served in various library management positions with the Federal Government over a 28-year career. As NAL's associate director for automation, she was instrumental in the success of the National Agricultural Text Digitizing Program in which selected portions of the NAL collection are placed on compact discs and distributed to land-grant university libraries nationwide.

Other positions she held during her career included assistant chief of the MARC Editorial Division, Library of Congress (LC), a member of the management team of the LC Optical Disk Pilot Project, and a computer systems analyst with LC. She has a master's degree in library science from the University of Maryland.

## **RIC Assists Homeless Veterans**

NAL's Rural Information Center (RIC) helped an Idaho regional development consortium develop a program for homeless veterans. The Idaho consortium contacted RIC requesting resource information on developing a homeless veterans job program and identifying funding sources. RIC supplied general information on the reintegration of homeless veterans into the work force and identified a Rural Demonstration Project funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The Idaho consortium applied for the project and was one of six selected nationwide. The project will be funded for 2 years for a total of \$180,000 and will support one full-time staff member and various support services. It will provide outreach to homeless veterans, assess vocational strengths and weaknesses, and eventually place nearly 50 percent of those contacted in training and other programs in jobs.

## **TTIC Aids Farm Equipment Industry**

Federal laboratory representatives from the Army, Department of Energy, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and USDA collaborated with NAL's Technology Transfer Information Center (TTIC) to identify chemical and physical sensor technology to meet the needs of the agricultural equipment manufacturing industry.

TTIC compiled the 79 findings in a report entitled "Transferring Technologies for the Agricultural Equipment Manufacturing Industry" and distributed it to industry and Federal laboratory representatives and university researchers. TTIC will continue to conduct research on two of the high-priority areas: using sensors to detect potentially hazardous atmospheres in production agriculture and using sensors on agricultural equipment to

reduce human risks.

Objectives of the program are to find technological solutions to meet an agricultural industry's needs and to evaluate the process used in this study to determine if it could be used for other agricultural industries.

## **Special Publication**

### **Addresses Sibling**

#### **Abuse**

A human development specialist with the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service and staff from NAL's Technology Transfer Information Center published "Selected Resources on Sibling Abuse: An Annotated Bibliography for Researchers, Educators and Consumers." The publication was distributed at the Future of Families: Mandate for New Initiatives workshop during the International Year of the Family conference in July 1994. The research on sibling abuse will become part of the national violence research database that will provide the basis and justification for community educational programs.

## **NAL Helps Smokey**

### **Bear Celebration**

Items from the National Agricultural Library formed the basis for a national exhibit marking the 50th anniversary of Smokey Bear, the popular icon of forest fire prevention. The exhibit, which toured various cities in the United States throughout the year, featured posters, toys, comic books, coloring books, audio recordings of songs and radio ads, television commercials, and other material.

NAL has the largest collection of Smokey Bear materials in the world. The collection was given to the library by USDA's Forest Service. Since receiving the Forest Service materials on Smokey in 1990, NAL has been augmenting the collection with donations from other sources.

The touring exhibit--"Happy Birthday, Smokey!"--was developed by the Fernbank Museum of Natural History in Atlanta in cooperation with the Forest Service and private businesses in Washington, DC. "Happy Birthday, Smokey!" traces the history and future of Smokey Bear, the success of the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program, the ecological role of forests, and the science of fire. The exhibit was on display in Dallas, Atlanta, Washington, DC, and in museums in California and New York.

## **NAL Exhibit Shows**

### **Swiss Contributions**

#### **to U.S. Agriculture**

The contributions to U.S. agriculture of immigrants from the Italian-speaking region of Switzerland was the subject of a new exhibit developed by NAL and the Embassy of Switzerland in 1994. Focusing on the Albertonis, a California family descended from immigrants from Ticino, Switzerland, the exhibit includes historical photographs, rare agricultural reference books, and other materials from the NAL collection.

The exhibit covers agriculture in Switzerland, Swiss immigrants' contributions to farming methods throughout the United States, and contributions of Swiss-Italian immigrants to California agriculture in particular.

The Associates of the National Agricultural Library, a private "friends of the library" group, assisted in

developing the exhibit. It was on display at the Swiss Embassy in Washington, DC, and in the NAL lobby.