



**USAIN**

UNITED STATES AGRICULTURAL  
INFORMATION NETWORK

Dear USAIN Members,

We have reached the closing of another USAIN cycle and I am pleased to submit the following report on behalf of the USAIN Executive Council. This has been a busy year for the EC as we continued the tradition of monthly conference calls, pursued ongoing development of the new website, and—in conjunction with the AgNIC Annual Conference—held a face-to-face meeting on May 5.

It has been an amazing experience serving as President and as our USAIN year comes to a close I look forward to continuing as Past-President under the leadership of our new President, Philip Herold.

Respectfully,  
Valrie Minson  
President 2014-2015

## **USAIN Highlights of 2014-2015**

### **Executive Council 2014-2015**

President: Valrie Minson

Past President: Connie Britton

President-Elect: Philip Herold

Secretary/Treasurer: Claudine Jenda

Directors: Madeleine Charney, Leslie Delserone, Peter Fernandez, Hope Jansen, Amy Shannon, Sarah C. Williams

NAL Representative: Chris Cole

Ex-Officio Members: Amy Paster, Archivist; Suzanne Reinman, Webmaster

**Outgoing Executive Council Members for 2014-2015:** Connie Britton, Madeleine Charney, Hope Jansen

**Incoming Executive Council Members for 2014-2015:** Cristina Caminita, Kristen Mastel, Jessica Page

### **Committee Chairs 2014-2015**

- Awards and Honors: non-active year
- Budget: Claudine Jenda
- Bylaws: Connie Britton
- Communications: Megan Kocher
- Conference Planning 2016: Valrie Minson
- Legislative and Government Relations: Suzanne Reinman

- Membership: Julie Kelly and Melody Royster
- Nominations and Elections: Connie Britton
- Preservation and Digital Library: Michael Cook
- Professional Development (Special Project Committee): Noel Kopriva

#### **Interest Group Conveners 2014-2015**

- Agricultural Economics Research, Information, and Education (AERIE): Mary Dugan and Linda Eells
- AgNIC: Bradley Brazzeal and Rob McGeachin
- Animal Health Information: Sandra Weingart and Kyrille DeBose
- Collection Management: Jodee Kuden and Natalie Waters
- International Agriculture: Marty Kesselman and Jim Morris-Knowler
- Social Issues/Rural Information: Kathleen Monks and Necia Parker Gibson
- Technology Trends: Netta Cox and Luti Salisbury

*Action Plan Goal 1. Strengthen membership and increase participation in USAIN by members and other food and agricultural information professionals.*

- Off-conference years can be more challenging for membership recruitment and despite strong outreach to underrepresented and underserved communities at community colleges with Ag programs, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Caribbean and Latin American Ag schools, there was a net loss of 12 members in 2015. We expect to see an increase again next year.
- The EC conducted a survey of the membership in fall and early winter. This year the survey questions focused on digitization and preservation efforts happening at the local level to get a sense of the general landscape of regional collaborations and projects.
- USAIN and AgNIC created a joint committee, led by David Krueger and Livia Olsen, and called AgNIC-USAIN Collaboration. This committee's primary responsibility was to explore the relationship between the two organizations and identify ways for each to more efficiently approach agricultural information services, support, and planning through the development of a new Memorandum of Agreement. The purpose of the Memorandum is to facilitate and enhance organizational cooperation and to establish formal affiliations between the parties to the agreement. The new Memorandum outlines two major changes: new specifications for the archiving and preservation of the Memorandum and creation of liaison positions to each organization. Peter Fernandez has volunteered to serve as the new USAIN liaison to AgNIC.

*Action Plan Goal 2. Advocate for public policy, legislation, and institutions which support agricultural research and information communities.*

- As you are aware, Dr. Simon Liu has been promoted to the position of Associate Administrator in the USDA's Agricultural Research Service and ARS is recruiting a new Director of the National Agricultural Library to facilitate cooperation with agricultural libraries of colleges, universities, USDA, private industry, and research libraries. Philip Herold is serving as USAIN's representative on the search committee and we hope to hear more in the near future about progress.

- In June 2014, USAIN joined the Disciplinary Associations Network for Sustainability (DANS), an association formed to explore, collaborate and share resources about how to educate for a more sustainable future. Madeleine Charney is serving as our USAIN liaison promote liaisons and our members have free access to the DANS resources.
- The Legislative and Government Relations Committee distributed information about the virtual Federal Depository Library Program Conference and the transcript for the *National Plan for Access to U.S. Government Information*.

*Action Plan Goal 3. Provide educational and professional development opportunities for members and others*

- The 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference will be held April 24-27, 2016 in Gainesville, Florida, hosted by the University of Florida, around a theme of “Interdisciplinary Agriculture: Meeting Tomorrow’s Global Challenges”. Conference planning is underway! Conference planning committees have been filled, website development is moving forward, and the Local Arrangements Committee is accepting input on development of a strong conference. Additionally, the EC, under the leadership of Philip Herold, have updated the hosting criteria and in the near future members should see an email calling for submission of host site proposals.
- Connie Britton and the Website Implementation Team have been working with JesseJames Creative (JJC) to create the new website. The Membership Committee, under Julie Kelly and Melody Royster, have been working on the membership data and renewal workflow requirements. The Communications Committee, especially Toni Greider and Megan Kocher, have assisted with mapping old content to the new site structure. It is our hope that the website will support the work of committees and interest groups as well as ease the work of the membership committee with management of the membership renewal process. While we continue our website implementation, Oklahoma State University will continue hosting for another year the current website.
- The new Professional Development Committee has been busy this last year. In Spring 2015 the committee worked with CABI to present a webinar on maximizing search efficiency and results in CABI products. Currently they have a call out for inviting proposals designed to highlight the impact of the Second Morrill Act of 1890 on agricultural information services.
- USAIN and AgNIC continued collaborations with CRL to fund a series of small preservation projects known as Project Ceres. The Preservation and Digital Library Committee has managed the selection process and in this second phase, 9 projects were funded at of \$49,997.50. In phase 3 the committee reviewed seven proposals and CRL will soon announce the list of awardees. To better meet the planning needs of the USAIN community, the Preservation and Digital Library has decided to expand the size of the committee and now includes members from the Project Ceres sub-committee.

Other activities

- In late fall of 2014, the Animal Health Interest Group, under the leadership of Sandra Weingart and Kyri DeBose, conducted a short survey to explore future directions of this group. There were

two thematic recommendations, including looking at benchmarks for best practices and continued-education opportunities in areas of animal health.

- This year the USAIN membership approved by vote to separate the duties of Secretary and Treasurer and we now have Jessica Page elected as our new Treasurer. The Procedures and Rules, which outline how we carry out business, were updated to reflect this new separation of duty between the two positions.