Summary of Survey Results and USAIN Recommendations to NAL

AGRICOLA Survey Results -- Statistics and Comments

The USAIN AGRICOLA Survey Committee began work in December 1997. Chaired by Anne Fox of Western Oregon University, the committee members were

Carla Casler, The University of Arizona, Arid Lands Information Center
Rob McGeachin, Texas A&M University
Anne Fox, Western Oregon University
Maria Pisa, National Agricultural Library
Sally Sinn, National Agricultural Library

The survey was distributed through USAIN-L, SLA-FAN (Special Libraries Association, Food, Agriculture & Nutrition Division), and VETLIB-L (an international listserv for veterinary librarians) in February 1998. About 70 people responded.
USAIN's AGRICOLA Interest Group conducted a survey of AGRICOLA users in February 1998. Most survey respondents rated AGRICOLA generally an excellent to very good database. AGRICOLA was listed most often when survey respondents were asked to list their five most used databases. Our survey also showed strong agreement with AGRICOLA's emphasis on core research journals and U.S. government publications in all fields related to agriculture. We were also pleased to find that NAL produces AGRICOLA records with a full journal title field and an abbreviated journal title field. Most survey respondents wanted to see the full journal title. USAIN will pursue this situation with SilverPlatter and other vendors who choose to show only the abbreviated title field.

NAL provides an extremely important function by producing AGRICOLA. USAIN strongly supports NAL in this endeavor and would like to see an even greater commitment of staff and resources to it.

Areas identified in the survey and through AGRICOLA Interest Group discussions where we would like to see NAL place even greater emphasis are:

- Include abstracts in as many records as possible.
- Include indexing for as many book chapters as possible.
- Index all USDA publications including regional publications which are sometimes missed.
- Facilitate the inclusion of state experiment station and extension publications.
- Give special consideration to the importance of timeliness in indexing all materials.
- Improve the interface and searching capabilities of the free internet version of AGRICOLA.

Again we want to emphasize the importance of AGRICOLA to the agricultural community and thank NAL for its efforts in producing this database. The free internet version of AGRICOLA will be a strong component of the Rural Information project and an important link on the AgNIC web pages. USAIN and its AGRICOLA Interest Group strongly support NAL's continuing efforts to improve and expand the AGRICOLA database.

Summary of AGRICOLA Survey and Recommendations to NAL

USAIN Home Page | AGRICOLA Survey Project

Updated 25 October 1999

Suggestions, or corrections for the web site? Contact Carla Casler
### AGRICOLA Survey Results - 1999

1. **Does your library have access to the AGRICOLA database?**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **If you have access to the AGRICOLA database do you use it?**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **How do you access it?**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD-ROM</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*LAN, telnet, FirstSearch (OCLC), Cambridge Sci. Abst. Dialog, networked SilverPlatter

4. **From which vendor do you purchase AGRICOLA?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCLC FirstSearch</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SilverPlatter</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovid</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialog</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STN</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other**</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Free Internet from NAL 26, Cambridge Sci. 2, Iowa St. Notis 1, Community of Science 1

5. **What other databases do you use for agricultural and related questions?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CABI</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOSIS</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medline</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Rank the five most used databases at your library.

   (include AGRICOLA if appropriate)

Listed below are all databases which received at least 7 total votes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acad.Index</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGRICOLA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biosis</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CABI</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chem. Abst.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curr. Cont.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISI (SCI)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medline</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PsycInfo</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Rate the importance of coverage in AGRICOLA to you and your patrons of the following types of publications:

   SCALE (5) of extreme importance (4) very important (3) somewhat important (2) not very important (1) of no importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Publication</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. research journals</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. trade journals</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. popular magazines</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. USDA and other US govt. reports</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. state experiment station pubs.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. state extension pubs.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. books</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. book chapters</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. conference proceedings</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. papers within proceedings</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. audio-visual materials (multimedia)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. electronic publications</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. patents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8a. What five general topic areas do you search most often?

- Agriculture (general)
- Agrarian reform 2
- Agribusiness 9
- Agricultural economics
- Agricultural education
- Agricultural engineering 4
- Agrochemicals 4
- Agroforestry
- Agronomy 2
- Animal behavior
- Animal biology field studies
- Animal diseases
- Animal health 4
- Animal husbandry/nutrition
- Animal pathology
- Animal production
- Animal science 26
- Aquaculture 8
- Biochemistry 2
- Biomedical research 2
- Bio-processing
- Biotechnology (agricultural) 2
- Botany 2
- Business information
- Cancer
- Cell biology
- Chemical contamination
- Chemistry
- Crop breeding
- Crop science (tropical)
- Crop science 12
- Crops (nonfood uses of)
- Desertification
- Ecology & population biology
- Ecology 4
- Entomology 4
- Environment 6
- Farmers & ranchers (info. mgmt for)
- Fertilizers
- Fisheries
- Food & nutrition
- Food processing
- Food science 5
- Food systems
- Food technology & hygiene
- Food technology 11
- Forest botany
- Forest products
- Forest resources
- Forestry (tropical)
- Forestry 5
- Forestry ecology
- Genetic engineering
- Genomic research
- Global change & ecology
- Health & medicine
- Horticulture 16
- Human health 2
- Human medicine
- Human-animal bond
- Laboratory animal related materials
- Land rehabilitation
- Legislation
- Medicine 2
- Microbiology 3
- Molecular biology 2
- Non-indigenous species
- Nutrition & diet
- Nutrition 18
- Parasitology
8b. What topics would you like to see given more emphasis in AGRICOLA?
• Agribusiness
• Agribusiness regulations
• Agriculture/wildlife interaction
• Animal nutrition
• Canada
• Emerging diseases
• Food technology
• Global agriculture
• Rural sociology & development (Third World esp. Africa)
• Social & political issues
• Tropical crops
• Wetlands
• Wildlife habitat
• Wildlife
• Abstracts for all entries
• Agricultural experiment station reports
• Conferences
• Extension publications
• Forest products industry trade journals
• Popular magazines
• State publications
• Trade literature 3
• Up-to-date entries

9. Rate importance of geographic coverage in AGRICOLA:

SCALE (5) of extreme importance (4) very important (3) somewhat important (2) not very important (1) of no importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Area</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. North America</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Europe</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Lesser Developed Countries</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Rate the importance of publication years covered in AGRICOLA:

SCALE (5) of extreme importance (4) very important (3) somewhat important (2) not very important (1) of no importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication years</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990-present</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1990</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1980</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre 1970</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. Rate the importance of basic descriptive fields in the AGRICOLA record:

SCALE (5) of extreme importance (4) very important (3) somewhat important (2) not very important (1) of no importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Field</th>
<th>5</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full journal name in source</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviated journal name in source</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author's abst. when available available</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Rate the importance of the "value added" fields in the AGRICOLA record:

SCALE (5) of extreme importance (4) very important (3) somewhat important (2) not very important (1) of no importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Added Fields</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Descriptors from CAB Thesaurus</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keywords</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category codes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Are you familiar with this version of AGRICOLA?

- yes 50
- no 14

Have you used it?

- yes 42
- no 21

Rate the searching capabilities.

- excellent 3
- good 16
Rate the individual record information.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fair</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rate the appearance of the screens.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fair</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poor</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. (cont.) Comments on the FREE Internet VERSION of AGRICOLA:

- Great to have it free on the web.
- The split file arrangement is awkward and the general look and feel are somewhat amateurish, although usually effective. Compared to PubMed, though, it really looks bad.
- SilverPlatter version easier to use. Difficult to find by keyword or combined keywords.
- A rather clean user interface. Help is plain and simple. Especially appreciate the browsing function by keyword (to locate similar or related terms.)
- The layout of the screens are excellent, however, we experience one serious problem; sometimes research results are not displayed. (We are not sure whether this is a local system problem.)
- Good resources but has limited search options compared with the commercial versions.
- No abstracts.
- Nice to have it available for public use. This is a good example of the outreach features of USDA and its agencies.
- The limited time range is a problem for us. That is why we continue to use the subscriber service.
- Will try it soon.
- Does not cover enough.
- The thing I miss is the abstract field, but we don't use it enough to buy it in order to get that.
- OK if you have no other way to get to the database.
- Appreciate this version and will encourage patrons to use it.
- While I am very pleased to see a freely accessible version, frankly I would judge it a thousand miles away from the software used in the free Medlines and also SilverPlatter, CSA, and even Ovid.
- Not a very user-friendly interface. I do tell folks about this resource… especially foreign visitors.
- I need more to explore and to promote its use by students and faculty.
- Allow for limitations by years. Lengthen the number of characters per line, so one record can appear with one screen shot.
- In an age of value-added and user-friendly, this version is regressive.
- Faster than the paid-for version.
- Easy to use.
- Why do you need separate advanced search? Incorporate features into one.
- It is great that this is available. Our patrons are pleased to be able to access AGRICOLA outside the library.
- The fact that it is freely accessible makes it possible for customers in remote locations to use this important database. The search interface is not as powerful or friendly as others I've used.
- Nice!
- I will use it for quick, short searches. I will use Dialog or the University Library's CD-ROM for extensive searches.

14. If you collect use data on AGRICOLA at your institution please include it here by number of searches or uses per a defined time period. (A photocopy of use statistics from your library's annual report or a copy of the OCLC FirstSearch statistics if you happen to access AGRICOLA through FirstSearch or whatever format you are able to obtain most easily will be fine.)

No statistics received

15. Rate the AGRICOLA database generally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>excellent</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fair</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poor</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. What do you like most about AGRICOLA?

- I felt individually authored chapters were very valuable and did not now that they had stopped the practice.
- Breadth of coverage.
- The comfort search mode and the including of most agricultural questions.
- The free version!
- Covers a broad spectrum of the agricultural information.
- Popular articles.
- Extensive coverage of US Agricultural Science.
- Contains records not found on CAB Abstracts.
- Scope: That it includes extension material and is quite strong in forestry.
- Easy to use, covers most of US forestry information, although not all.
- Access to all kinds of lit. including "GRAY LIT."
- Use CAB Thesaurus terms.
- Large animal info. 2
- Provides detailed info. not obtainable elsewhere except possibly in CAB Abstracts.
- Helpful for locating hard-to-track-down AG Reports and Government Docs.
- Well put together database of longstanding reputation.
- It includes the experiment station publications not available from my other databases.
- Coverage of unique materials such as extension publications.
- Coverage of botanical and ecological research.
- Not much, at this point (since we got CAB).
- Listed call numbers at NAL.
- Excellent coverage of US publications, relatively accessible to the public, coverage of historical Ag Exp. Station and Extension Service Publications, use of CAB descriptions.
- It covers a wide range of topics and a good span of years.
- Environment coverage.
- Good coverage of North American Research.
- Variety of literature type it used to cover.
- AGRICOLA enables us to identify scholarly publications and other research which we may not easily locate elsewhere. Especially true of foreign "grey", and other esoteric publications. Also strength of coverage back to 1970. And, we are grateful for the comparative cost of AGRICOLA, as a "national" resource.
- Great diversity of coverage – all formats both scholarly and "popular" materials. Ag Ext and experiment station coverage is of paramount importance and AGRICOLA has the best coverage of these. I also like the coverage of grey literature. Very few databases offer those materials.
- Comprehensiveness; extension/experiment station; quality.
- Includes book chapters – uses CAB thesaurus.
- Excellent supplement to our basic zoology indexes.
- Coverage of USDA/State Publications.
- Coverage of US Government Documents, applied as well as primary research.
- Comprehensive.
- The broad coverage, along with CAB abstracts, AGRICOLA is the most important agriculture database we have.
- The broad coverage – includes gray literature (writing papers exp. station and some extension).
- The retrieval of Ag Experiment and Ag Extension Pubs.
- FAST.
- Broad coverage of publications including State and Federal documents.
- Covers some material not available elsewhere.
- Available on the web.
- Well put together database of longstanding reputation.
- Comprehensiveness especially access to extension and experiment station publications.
- Wide range of topics covered. It is useful to both researchers and undergraduates.
- Access to State and Federal Agricultural Documents.
- Covers the USA for us Europeans.
- We would like to try to work if it’s possible with AGRICOLA CD-Rom.
- Invaluable for topics covered.
- Coverage of US Agricultural Materials. That should be emphasis, so USDA, extension and experiment station publications should be included.
- Covers Ag Exp Sta and extension pubs and some other literature not found elsewhere, including many older publications.
- I like the subject coverage and the fields of choice. I also like the extensive coverage of "hard to find" grey literature.
- Listed call numbers at NAL.
- North American focus (so compliments other sources).
- Cost, coverage a nice compliment to Medline especially for "plant" searches.
- It impresses me with its range of coverage. Although we use it most for its forestry related information.
we also show it to biology, nursing and kinesiology students.

17. What do you like least about AGRICOLA?

- No trade journals
- Does not cover Pacific and Southeast Asia as well as I would like—need more abstracts.
- HATE abbreviations journal titles -- DNAL call numbers too prominent for those of us not there.
- Abbreviated journal titles.
- Abbreviations in title line, including NAL reprint series without indicating original source publication.
- The continued duplication with other databases.
- Abbreviated journal titles, too many keywords indexed, DNAL number.
- Publication type field is virtually useless. Does not distinguish between book chapters and journal articles. Does not distinguish between books and other kinds of monographs.
- Unfortunately, when we buy a database from a vendor (First Search, Cambridge Abs, Dialog), we are at the mercy of that vendors search interface. It would be wonderful if all search interfaces could be as powerful as the OVID search which I love.
- Abstracts would help.
- Lack of controlled vocabulary.
- Limited number of abstracts.
- Not wide enough coverage.
- USA dominant.
- The importance of Northern America.
- Not enough abstracts.
- Delaying in indexing; infrequent updates.
- No personal service.
- First Search split the descriptor fields into two fields. It makes it hard to search using descriptor indexing. Seems to be behind sometimes.
- Differences between Agris and AGRICOLA.
- With electronic capabilities what they are, complete titles should be included in the source field.
- It is not as widely known as Medline.
- No abstracts and little coverage of Africa and Eastern Europe.
- Paucity of abstracts, lack of thesaurus.
- Vocabulary structure and value added indexing not as excellent as MESH. I usually use key words and hope for the best.
- Esoteric publications not generally available, although I understand and appreciate why they are there. This is one aspect that confuses me about the recent USAIN discussion of grey literature. Because AGRICOLA is now so available to end users, including marginal info will just frustrate and confuse them. I’m not sure this is the right place for it.
- I think the database has been too limited in the past few years. They have cut down the journal coverage too much.
- Controlled vocabulary sometimes seems needlessly arcane (term naming).
- The ISIS format cumbersome to search.
- Probably not entirely relevant for a veterinary medical institution, but that is not a valid criticism for the question.
- No abstracts on free version. Coverage.
- Limited number of abstracted articles.
- Don’t Know!
- Would like LC Call numbers.
• No online abstracts.
• Records not constant. Too many dups.
• Speaking as a Canadian, could use more Canadian content. Also more coverage of rural sociology/economics which are hot topics with our schools of social work, bus. admin. and our sociology dept.
• Lack of indexing and full abstracts. If it has to function as a research tool, our users need to see the abstracts. We miss several good references because of the minimal indexing.
• Abbreviated journal titles, confusion on dates published vs date incorporated into database.
• Lack of comprehensive coverage of ag. titles (CAB is better) many journals are lagging 1-5 years- too slow at getting records in. I tell folks to use CAB instead!
• No abstracts and little coverage of Africa and Eastern Europe.
• Records not consistent, too many dups.
• There is nothing I really dislike about it.
• Nothing.
• Cuts in indexing a variety of literature types.
• Would like to see abstracts entered for materials that do not have author abstracts. For example, abstracts for materials from organizations, government and other non-periodical materials. Abstracts help users to decide if the item is really relevant to their needs.
• First, I appreciate that NAL does an excellent job with limited resources. The inconsistency in AGRICOLA is troubling. Most troublesome was the dropping of standard journals published in english outside of the US. This makes cross-searching in AGRICOLA and CAB a necessity. It is particularly troublesome since this decision was made with no or little announcement to the user community. It is also apparent that some subject areas are well represented with abstracts and some aren’t. Likewise, the mixture of CAB thesaurus terms and LC subject headings was something that I brought up when teaching classes on knowing your database. I think it is important for AGRICOLA to find its position relative to CAB. CAB seems to have taken over the pre-eminent place as the scholarly database. If AGRICOLA is going to continue to be free on the Internet, it may want to include more popularly-oriented material to meet the needs of producing farmers.

18. Final comments and suggestions:

• Why "indexing catalog card" instead of "record"? Like index browse option. AGRICOLA on COS is really good.
• We are a departmental Library on a large campus – we make much more specialized use of AGRICOLA than our colleagues in other units.
• Merge fully with CAB and FAO databases and other AG sources. Agriculture is so important that someone with money should produce one world access tool.
• Full Journal Name would be helpful.
• An important index. Keep up the good work.
• Thanks so much for the opportunity to give feedback.
• Abstracts would be welcome.
• I really appreciate the closer cooperation with CAB. We mainly use the SilverPlatter version (WinSpirs) and it would be nice to cross-over a search using thesaurus terms and concept codes.
• It’s a good product - - - We’ll keep getting it.
• I’m not using AGRICOLA as much since we got access to Web of Science (ISI) this summer.
• I am commenting from the perspective of University Libraries, although I work in the SciTech branch
of University Libraries. (I do this because departments – Reference, Cataloging, etc. – within University Libraries serve the system as a whole; that is, they are not library specific). If you would like me to answer questions from the SciTech Library perspective, please let me know.

- We are an information retrieval centre of Library of University of Veterinary Medicine, Kosice, Slovak Republic. Database AGRICOLA is a suitable database for researchers and education in the University. If it's possible to send us some free copies of the database on CD-Rom.
- Would appreciate having the full journal title in the citation. Would like to see more abstracts. Would like to see more popular ag and farming magazine and trade journal coverage since this material is infrequently indexed elsewhere. In NAL’s free Web version of AGRICOLA, would like the option of searching the entire database rather than searching the Books and Articles parts separately.
- The NAL needs more funding to do this database in an adequate fashion – more journals, authored chapters, more abstracts, etc. The Web version needs to have more sophisticated searching to be easier to use, but I am used to Dialog. Possibly breaking the file into some broad subject areas would allow for better searching.
- Good Agricultural database to be search in conjunction with CAB.
- Probably would suggest to patrons to use it more if it had more economics related citations
- It is nevertheless very useful. The free version is very helpful, as we do not have money to subscribe to all agricultural databases and with the present cut in our budget we may even loose CABI.
- The free could be improved by using a more sophisticated search engine and online thesaurus.
- Thanks for the opportunity to comment.
- We are primarily a medical library that serves some Ag. students and faculty because of proximity.
- AGRICOLA should emphasize materials not covered by CAB and concentrate on North America
- I wish CAB, NAL and the Agris folks could agree on non-overlapping coverage . . . . .
- Needs wider geographical coverage and higher percentage of abstracts.
- Thank you for providing as much as you do. An excellent resource which speaks ‘volumes’ when it comes to a way of saying: "Your tax dollars at work!" I hope AGRICOLA, through NAL receives the kind of national support necessary to keep this a top-notch database worthy of its ‘national’ (and international character). Our world-wide agricultural, animal-care, and allied interests are too important to undercut our knowledge-base. I appreciated the training, as well, which was made available several years ago (in my case, through AWIC/NAL). Thanks for providing this opportunity to share my thoughts.
- My overall assessment is that AGRICOLA still remains as the database to go to FIRST for searching information about agriculture in the wide sense. Everything from crop and animal production to getting a finished product to consumers. Perhaps it should expand the geographic coverage of South America so that the American continents (not just North America) are fully served.
- In business marketing the principle is to find an open niche in the market and fill it, AGRICOLA competes directly with three other databases. Unfortunately, AGRICOLA is the only database sponsored by an organization that can’t control its income or budget increases/decreases. Because of continuous budget cuts or constraints AGRICOLA will never be able to compete with other databases and be successful now or in the future. So AGRICOLA must find a niche to fill. The niche is with trade publications, extension and experiment station/research center publications, other US government publications, desktop published books, pamphlets, booklets, etc., and other grey literature in agriculture. I highly recommend AGRICOLA not index research journals that are done by other agriculture databases, but these things listed above. Thank your for asking, my two cents worth.
- We use AGRICOLA as one of our basic indexes relating to forestry and forest products. I would like to see more forest products information included, included industry, trade and marketing information.
Since we have had it available across campus, other folks are finding our about it and using it for other subjects as well, so it serves a wider audience that just our users. We do not have the agriculture collection, however, to support it since we have to agricultural college.

- As the Engineering Librarian at a land grant institution, I find that AGRICOLA is a useful database for some of our users particularly for those interested in water pollution, alternative uses for crops and processing of crops. Of course I am only speaking as the head of the Engineering Library. Responses from other libraries on campus would be very different I am sure.
- We do not have an agricultural program on our campus and faculty research is not focused in many areas. However, environmental and genomic interests are high for students. I don’t know how faculty use AGRICOLA, if at all. We have a very strong program in biochemistry and molecular biology and are just starting some new program concentrations in ecology, that might require a closer look at AGRICOLA. I send an electronic "newsletter" to biology faculty, BioInfo and can mention the online access. I can do the same for out library newsletter, SEL Re: Source, which I also edit.
- Include coverage of farm popular press titles (such as Farm Journal); these are not indexed anywhere as a rule. I’m not too concerned about the exclusion of Extension publications, as most are appearing on the web now, and there are plenty of aggregating sites and web browsers to use to access them.