

## Chapter 4

### Building Collections for Customer Access

In 2003, NAL made use of its new Voyager ILS to speed the acquisition of serials and monographs, added to its already significant special collections, made great strides in securing and preserving its collections, led development of a USDA taxonomy, and arranged for additional NAL special collections to be Web accessible. Along the way, NAL staff was able to mitigate a significant serials subscription problem resulting from a vendor's business failure.

#### Voyager ILS Improves Order Processing

NAL's implementation of the Voyager ILS significantly improved the effectiveness, accuracy, and efficiency of acquisitions and serials processing. Affected functions include order and claims processing, report writing, automatic label creation, and the ability to do copy cataloging using Library of Congress records. The latter function reduces the amount of time needed to produce NAL catalog records, giving users timely access to new monographs. Efficiencies such as these achieved with the Voyager system provide the basis for significantly improving the Library's operational effectiveness in the near future.

#### NAL Agricultural Thesaurus and USDA Taxonomy

In March 2003, NAL published the 2nd edition of the NAL Agricultural Thesaurus (<http://agclass.nal.usda.gov/agt/agt.shtml>)—an arrangement of structured terms that uniquely reflect agricultural subjects. This 2nd

**58,300**  
**Terms in the 2nd**  
**edition of the**  
**NAL Agricultural**  
**Thesaurus, 2,300**  
**terms added since**  
**the 1st edition in**  
**2002.**



Front cover of D.M. Ferry & Company's Seed Annual, 1882. Henry G. Gilbert Nursery and Seed Trade Catalog Collection. Special Collections, National Agricultural Library.

edition included 2,300 new terms for a total of 58,300 entries. NAL staff worked with USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) staff to expand the youth development, family studies, and consumer science subject areas for this new edition. In July 2003, NAL began assigning NAL Agricultural Thesaurus terms to new AGRICOLA records and to the AGRICOLA retrospective database. NAL continues to expand and update the NAL Agricultural Thesaurus, adding new terms and subjects, clarifying existing terminology, and incorporating taxonomic changes, enabling more relevant and useful Web access for users.

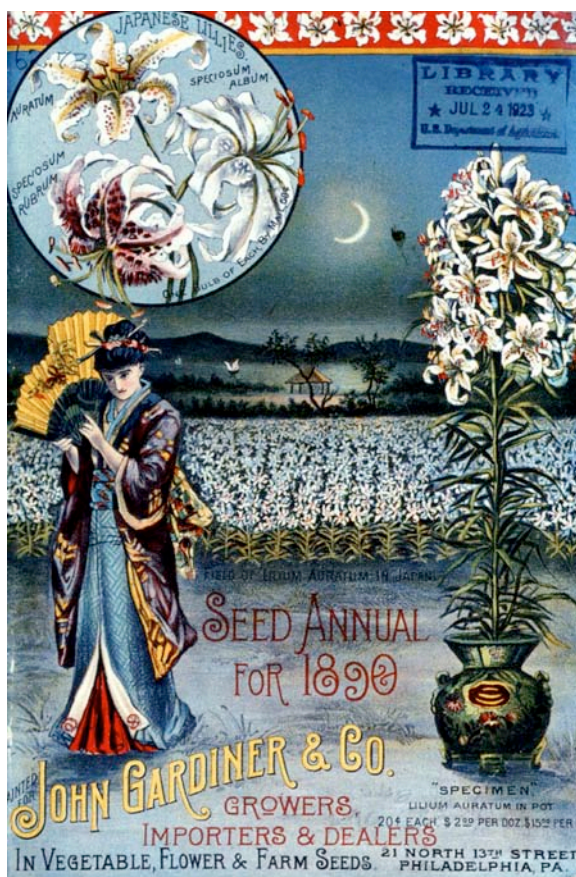
With the success of the NAL Agricultural Thesaurus, USDA asked NAL to use its taxonomy expertise to lead in the development of a taxonomy for USDA agencies. The resulting USDA taxonomy is an essential component of the e-government initiative and will be used to organize information across the Department of Agriculture.

### Collection Security

NAL collection services staff developed a handbook and training program to help security personnel answer visitor questions and identify materials from the NAL collection. Staff also produced a Disaster Recovery Manual, putting it to immediate use protecting collections during several “water events” affecting the collections. Recovery procedures were re-examined and improved after each event.

### Publications Digitized

NAL continued digitization of core agricultural literature in 2003, including the Journal of Agricultural Research, the Yearbook of Agriculture,



Front cover of John Gardiner & Company's Seed Annual, 1890. Henry G. Gilbert Nursery and Seed Trade Catalog Collection. Special Collections, National Agricultural Library.

**3,516,868**  
**Items—books,**  
**periodicals, maps,**  
**manuscripts,**  
**etc.—in the**  
**NAL collections,**  
**September 30,**  
**2003, an increase**  
**of 7,064 since**  
**2002.**

**\$20,868,578  
Funds  
appropriated  
for salaries  
and programs  
at NAL for FY  
2003. Another  
\$898,020 was  
appropriated  
for building  
repairs and  
maintenance.**

and miscellaneous articles and reprints from USDA programs. Three serial titles, consisting of 319 volumes, were sent to the National Library of Medicine's PubMed Central digitization project. Finally, guidelines to aid future identification and selection of publications for digitization and preservation were developed and adopted.

### **Preservation**

NAL's special collections staff studied the preservation requirements for 10,600 linear feet of manuscripts and rare books in the NAL collections, resulting in the rehousing of 1,000 linear feet of oversize materials. Staff also created custom boxes for 651 books from the general collection and microfilmed 42 badly deteriorated volumes.

NAL staff continued the initiative to examine the Library's collection of 1,300 newspapers in preparation for preservation microfilming or transferring these materials to preservation-quality boxes.

### **Preserving Still-Images**

In May 2003, NAL began a cooperative project with the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Boston College Library to improve the care and accessibility of still-image collections. The project participants will develop guidelines to help libraries integrate preservation and digitization functions for still images.



Printing blocks created from original C.V. Riley drawings used to illustrate entomology publications. C.V. Riley Printing Blocks Collection. Special Collections, National Agricultural Library.

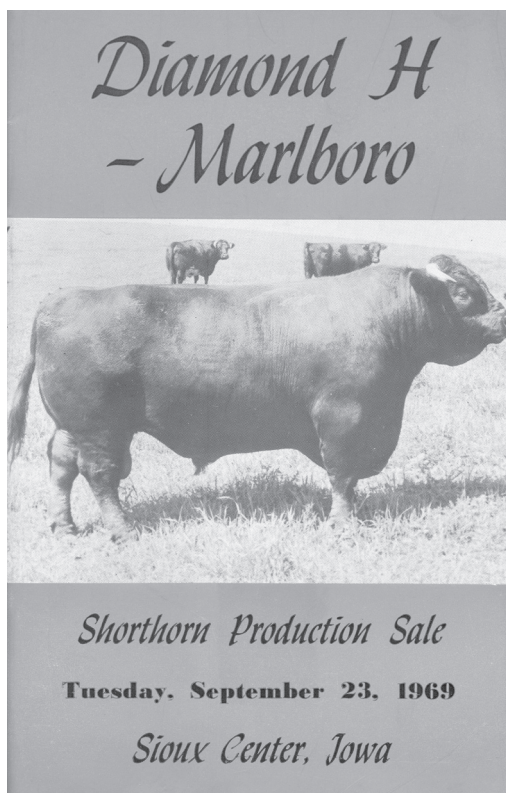
## New Acquisitions for Special Collections

### Shorthorn Cattle Collection

Donated by Wayne Caldwell Neely, the Shorthorn Cattle Collection includes approximately 4,500 catalogs of Shorthorn cattle public sales and a few private-sale or herd catalogs, breed magazine files, official herd books, breed history books, and a wide variety of ephemeral-related publications. Neely's family owned an Iowa farm where they bred purebred Shorthorn cattle from 1883 to 1993. The Shorthorn Cattle Collection reflects Neely's love of the study of pedigree breeds. Most of the catalogs were produced in the United States, but the collection includes catalogs from Canada, the British Isles, Australia, South Africa, and other countries where Shorthorn cattle are bred. NAL staff worked to organize and rehouse this extensive collection of valuable materials.

### Charles Valentine Riley Printing Blocks

The Entomological Society of America donated 1,211 woodcuts, electrotypes (electroplated lead molds of original engravings), and metal cast printing blocks used to illustrate Charles Valentine Riley's publications. These donated items join NAL's extensive collections of Charles Valentine Riley items. Riley (1843-1895) was the State entomologist of Missouri (1868-1877), an entomologist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (1878-1879), and Chief of the Federal Entomological Service (1894-1895).



Front cover of  
Diamond H. Marlboro  
Shorthorn Production  
Sale Catalog.  
Shorthorn Cattle  
Catalog Collection.  
Special Collections,  
National Agricultural  
Library.

**16,262  
Mediated  
reference  
requests received  
by NAL reference  
staff in FY 2003.**

### **Dorsett-Morse Oriental Agricultural Exploration Expedition Collection**

The American Soybean Association provided NAL with a collection of 17 diaries from the Dorsett-Morse Oriental Agricultural Exploration Expedition of 1928-1932. These items are on permanent loan to NAL, joining a previously donated set of seven photograph albums from the expedition (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/findaids/dorsett/dorsettintro.html>). The diaries constitute a rich multimedia resource reflecting the expedition's work as recorded in memoranda, expense reports, itineraries, maps, correspondence, ship logs, invoices, and photographs.

### **Special Collection Web Features**

NAL digitized and made Web accessible many important information resources, including the records of several important agricultural leaders and agricultural researchers (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/>).

### **The Frank N. Meyer Plant Exploration Collection**

This collection includes typescript correspondence about Meyer's exploration trip to South China from 1916 to 1918, small black and white photographs of plants found in China, personal letters, and accounts of Meyer's death during the expedition (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/exhibits/meyer/index.html>). From 1905 until his untimely death in 1918, Meyer led expeditions to China, Russia, Japan, and Europe to collect plant samples. Frank Meyer is honored the world over for his contributions as a plant explorer. From apricots to wild pears, Meyer introduced over 2,500 plants to the United States.

### **Abraham Lincoln and Agriculture**

On May 15, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed into law an Act of Congress establishing "at the seat of Government of the United States Department of Agriculture." The Abraham Lincoln and Agriculture exhibit documents the establishment of the Department of Agriculture, the Homestead Act, which provides 160 acres of land to any American or prospective citizens over the age of 21, and the Morrill Land Grant College Act, which donated public land to the states to establish public colleges of agriculture and mechanical arts. Images of the original acts are included in the exhibit (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/exhibits/lincoln/>).

### **Serial Issues**

When serials subscription vendor Divine/Faxon, Inc. filed for bankruptcy in early 2003 after renewing only a small fraction of NAL subscriptions for serials published in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, the

**18,024  
Print serials  
received by  
NAL, FY 2003.**

delay in assigning a new contract threatened to create gaps in the Library's serial collections. NAL's concurrent migration to the Voyager ILS serials control system further complicated the situation and heightened concern. NAL staff was able to mitigate this by extensive negotiations, thus avoiding potential holdings gaps, by claiming missing issues from publishers and other suppliers. As a result, we expect that NAL's customers will have access to serial issues published throughout this period.



Vin-nel Princess Dahlia. J. Horace McFarland Collection. Special Collections, National Agricultural Library.

## Selected Statistics\*

Collections	2000	2001	2002	2003
Volumes held	2,336,549	2,351,433	2,364,878	2,373,695
Volumes added (net)	21,236	14,884	13,445	8,817
Monographs purchased	5,609	4,700	3,705	927
Current serials received	20,763	19,616	19,079	18,024
Microform units	1,073,975	1,075,913	1,078,365	1,085,057
Computer files	1,519	1,607	1,675	1,734
Manuscripts and archives (linear feet)	18,769	18,819	18,867	18,994
Cartographic	1,870	4,287	4,506	4,662
Graphic	821	1,087	1,104	1,115
Audio	461	461	461	461
Film and video	3,664	3,622	3,779	3,382
<b>Information Services</b>				
Mediated reference transactions****	25,724	30,611	17,151	16,262
Document requests received	151,846	138,198	149,726	125,538
Requests filled from NAL collections	115,850	103,754	106,617	95,630
Requests filled through borrowing	16,873	15,767	19,727	13,903
Weekly public service hours	40	40	40	40
<b>Web-Based Services</b>				
Hits to NAL main server	17,769,657	24,129,599	36,287,534	43,574,679
Hits to school meals server	995,641	1,151,165	2,287,063	3,167,524
Hits to NAL AgNIC Web server	4,662,131	4,300,572	4,601,617	5,777,831
Hits to Invasive Species server	37,101	1,060,677	1,036,847	1,438,712
NAL Web search engine queries***			275,429	427,257
Hits to FSTEAs server***		23,997	245,394	348,103
Hits to DigiTop proxy server				513,688
<b>Personnel</b>				
Professional, FTE**	108	107	109	129
Support and student, FTE**	65	62	55	89
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>218</b>

\* Statistics are from October 1 through September 30 each year.

\*\* Includes contractors and cooperators on long-term agreement.

\*\*\* In 2001 and 2002, NAL began to measure hits not previously reported.

\*\*\*\* The decline in mediated reference transactions from 2001 to 2002 is due largely to the application (in 2002) of a different means of counting these transactions.