

Mission 6: NAL enhances global cooperation through international exchange of information and the provision of services and technical assistance

NAL continued work with an array of international partners to advance use of information technology in the service of agricultural research and development.

For example, NAL and the U.S. Department of State collaborated in 2001 to provide ARIEL (a document transmission system that delivers over the Internet using both the FTP and MIME standards) workstations and training, plus AGRICOLA access in Russia for the All-Russian Institute for Animal Health, the State Research Center of Virology and Biotechnology, the All-Russian Institute of Phytopathology, and the State Research Center for Applied Microbiology. NAL continues to provide briefings and demonstrations for interns and visitors from other countries and many international organizations.

NAL and the Agricultural Research Service's Mycotoxin Research Unit jointly funded a 1998-1999 review of recent wheat-head scab research in China. The review surveyed U.S. wheat breeders and researchers to identify what they wanted to know about recent Chinese research initiatives and resistant wheat varieties. U.S. researchers of Chinese ancestry were sent to China to find the answers to those questions. The literature and program reviews were summarized in English and made available over the Internet. The resulting study, "Recent Advances in Wheat Head Scab Research in China," was published on the NAL website (<http://www.nal.usda.gov/pgdic/WHS/about.html>) in 2000. As a result of reading the report, one scientist went to China to collect specific resistant germplasm.

NAL trained information specialists from other countries in management and delivery of agricultural information. From 2000 through 2002, NAL trained five information professionals from the Agricultural Research Council of South Africa who received Cochran Fellowship Program (CFP) support administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. The U.S. Congress provides CFP funding for training senior and midlevel specialists or agriculturalists from middle-income countries, emerging markets, and emerging democracies.

In May 2000, NAL hosted the 32nd annual meeting of the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries, allowing information specialists from Canada and Europe to have a look at NAL's electronic systems and resources. In May 2001, NAL hosted a reception during a conference on "Food Safety Through Dynamic Leadership," which drew participants from public and private institutions in North, Central, and South America. NAL staff gave a well-received presentation at the 2002 conference of the International Association of Technological University Libraries.

NAL and other AgNIC institutions welcomed Agricultural Information and Documentation System for America (SIDALC) and its participating Latin American and Caribbean partners as an AgNIC member in 2000. SIDALC is a joint effort among agricultural information providers in the Americas and the Caribbean and is coordinated by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA). In 2001, NAL agreed to bring up a website that mirrors the SIDALC website.

Selected Statistics*

	2000	2001	2002
Collections			
Volumes held	2,336,549	2,351,433	2,364,878
Volumes added during the year (net)	21,236	14,884	13,445
Monographs purchased	5,609	4,700	3,705
Current serials received	20,763	19,616	19,079
Microform units	1,073,975	1,075,913	1,078,365
Computer files	1,519	1,607	1,675
Manuscripts and archive (linear feet)	18,769	18,819	18,867
Cartographic	1,870	4,287	4,506
Graphic	821	1,087	1,104
Audio	461	461	401
Film and video	3,664	3,622	3,779
Information Services			
Mediated reference transactions**	23,727	30,611	17,151
Document requests received	151,846	138,198	149,726
Requests filled from NAL collection	115,850	103,754	106,617
Requests filled through borrowing	16,873	15,676	19,727
Weekly public service hours	40	40	40
Web-based services			
Hits to NAL main server	17,769,657	24,129,599	36,287,534
Hits to school meals server	995,641	1,151,165	2,287,063
Hits to NAL AgNIC Web server	4,662,131	4,300,572	4,601,617
Hits to InvasiveSpecies.gov server	37,101	1,060,677	1,036,847
NAL Web search engine queries***	—	—	275,429
Hits to FSTEAs server***	—	23,997	245,394
Personnel			
Professional, FTE	108	107	109
Support, FTE	65	62	55
Total	173	169	164

* Statistics are October 1 through September 30 each year.

** 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.

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

