Mission 1: NAL serves as a national library of the United States and as the library serving the United States Department of Agriculture

Digital Desktop Library for USDA

NAL developed a digital desktop library for USDA—DigiTop—to bring a vast amount of published information about agriculture and its related sciences to the computers of USDA employees and to other users at USDA public access points.

Launched at the end of 2002 for a 12-month pilot year, DigiTop provides 24-hour Web access to key databases, full-text journals and journal articles, newspapers, statistics, and other digital information sources. DigiTop features products that focus on scientific research, though it also includes access to digital information services for directories of institutional leaders, facts on foreign countries, and a broad array of commercial, licensed digital content. Funding for DigiTop's pilot year came from USDA agency contributions. NAL is working with USDA agencies to develop future funding structures.

At the end of 2002, NAL customers within USDA were telling us they liked DigiTop and wanted additional services and resources delivered digitally. A USDA Forest Service scientist in Arkansas wrote: "Our unit is ecstatic to have this kind of digital access. I hope this is a long-term arrangement that will be expanded as time goes on."

An Agricultural Research Service ecologist in Mississippi wrote: "This DigiTop resource is fantastic. I spent an hour yesterday searching pertinent articles for a manuscript, whereas before I would have spent half a day or more. I also appreciate the other resources that are available on the same home page. It's like one-stop shopping. Whoever designed this had us in mind."

Across-Government Web Resources

To serve public need for information across Government about science, nutrition, and invasive species, NAL worked with other Federal agencies to establish three multiagency websites:

- www.science.gov, a collaborative Governmentwide science website, created as an interagency initiative of 17 U.S. Government science organizations within 12 Federal agencies. Science.gov provides wide public access and a unified search of the Government's vast stores of scientific and technical information.

- www.nutrition.gov, a central source of science-based nutrition information, hosted by the Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Department of Health and Human Services.

- www.invasivespecies.gov, an online system established by 12 Federal departments and agencies and hosted by NAL as a gateway to Federal efforts concerning invasive species. Invasivespecies.gov provides reliable information about the impacts of invasive species and the Federal Government's response, as well as select species profiles and links to agencies and organizations dealing with invasive species issues.

3,509,804
Items—books, periodicals, maps, manuscripts, etc.—in the NAL collections, September 30, 2002.

K-12 Education

As the Department of Agriculture continued to support agricultural education outreach, NAL created a science website (http://www.nal.usda.gov/Kids/) oriented toward children. Launched in early 2000, the website is designed to provide opportunities for children to explore agriculture-related subjects such as animals, plants, the environment, and food and nutrition.

Mission 2: NAL acquires, preserves, organizes, and provides access to information and provides quality stewardship of its unique collection

149,726
Requests for documents received by NAL in FY 2002. Of these, 71 percent were filled from NAL collections, the balance filled from other sources.

New Acquisitions

NAL added some of the historic literature and art in agricultural science to its special collections. Included in its 2000-2002 acquisitions are:

- U.S. National Animal Parasite Collection covering the history of veterinary parasitology since the 1890s.
- Rudolph Wendelin Collection of Smokey Bear paintings, featuring 19 original paintings of fire-prevention ace Smokey Bear, created by longtime Smokey Bear illustrator Rudy Wendelin.
- Society of American Florists Collection, early records of the floral industry in the United States including several rare books from the society's library.
- Sketchbook of art studies, 1856-1859, from Charles Valentine Riley, noted entomologist, former entomologist to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, leader in development of biological control of insects, and scientific illustrator. The sketchbook will enhance the C.V. Riley collection, one of NAL's treasures.

Making Special Collections Accessible

NAL digitized and made Web-accessible (http://www.nal.usda.gov/specoll) the records of several important agricultural researchers and research programs plus other significant resources, including:

- Curtis's Botanical Magazine (1787-1791) (http://www.nal.usda.gov/curtis); Curtis's Botanical is the longest running botanical periodical featuring color illustrations of plants. Detailed but readable text combines horticultural and botanical information with such topics as history, conservation, and economic uses of a worldwide range of plants. It has been published continuously since 1787, currently by Kew Gardens. NAL has digitized some of the early volumes.
- The Papers of Erwin F. Smith (1813-1938) and his "Bibliography of Peach Yellows." Smith, a pioneer in bacterial plant pathology, served as USDA's chief of plant pathology for almost four decades. His work on

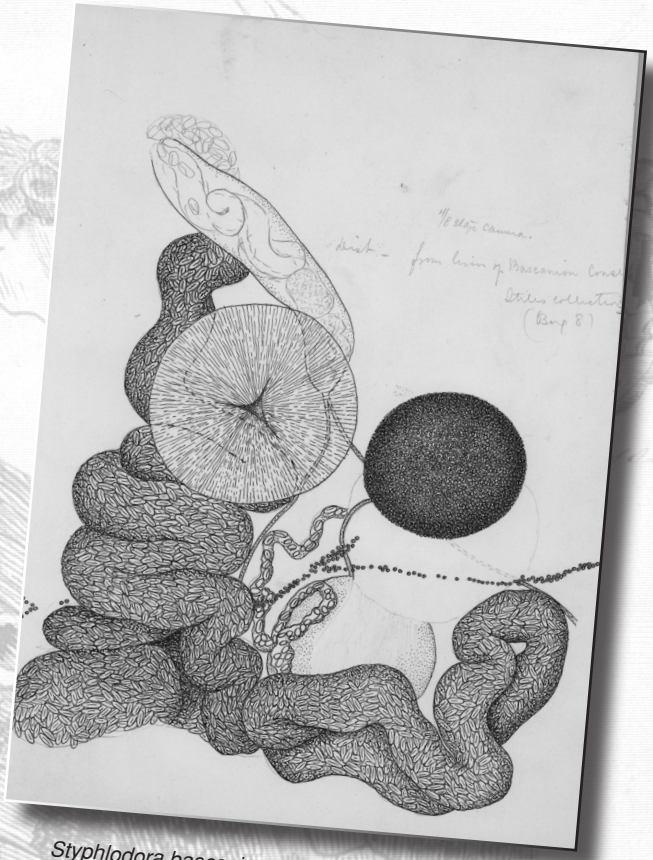
Mexican wheat. Photographer and date unknown. USDA History Collection. Special Collections, National Agricultural Library.

peach yellows continues to be considered valuable for scientists and historians. His papers are described at http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/findaids/smith/. His bibliography received full conservation treatment and was microfilmed and digitized.

- Jean François Durande's "Notions élémentaires de botanique" (http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/rarebooks/durande), digitized for preservation and access. Jean François Durande (1732-1794) was a French botanist and teacher in Dijon, France. In his 1782 textbook, "Notions élémentaires de botanique," Durande attempted to summarize the state of knowledge in botany, especially the classification of plants.

- Dorsett-Morse Oriental Agricultural Exploration Expedition Collection (http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/findaids/dorsett/); documentation of the Oriental Agricultural Exploration Expedition of 1929-1931.

- The USDA History Collection, containing materials transferred from the Agricultural History Branch of USDA's Economic Research Service in 1997 (http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/collect/history/index.htm), a collection built by the Department's historians over 80 years, described as the best single source for information on the history of the Department of Agriculture.



Styphlodora bascaniensis. Artist unknown, 1898. U.S. National Animal Parasite Collection Records. Special Collections, National Agricultural Library.

- Screwworm Eradication Collection (http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/collect/screwworm/), seven decades of records on one of USDA's greatest accomplishments, first released as a CD and later added to the NAL website for greater accessibility.

- Alvin L. Young Collection on Herbicide Agent Orange (http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/findaids/agentorange/); 3,000 of over 150,000 documents on the development, use, and potential health effects of this herbicide are available as full-text documents.

To date, NAL's special collections website provides access to about 150,000 digitized pages of full-text articles and scientific documentation on a variety of agricultural subjects.

44.7 million
Total hits to NAL websites in FY 2002 (an average of about 85 hits each minute, 24/7), increasing by 26 percent each year.

Environmental Storage for Special Collections

In 2000, NAL began planning to build secure and environmentally stabilized storage for its rare books and manuscript materials, a state-of-the-art facility to meet or exceed the environmental standards set by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). SmithGroup, an architectural and engineering firm specializing in design of museum and archives facilities, was hired to design the space and oversee this specialized construction project on NAL's fifth floor. In 2001 and 2002, the offices

occupying the space were demolished and construction of the new storage began. Meanwhile, NAL special collections staff worked on detailed plans for the transfer of about 15,000 rare volumes and several hundred manuscript collections to the newly constructed space.

Completed in early 2003, this space for NAL's special collections includes its own air-handling system, lighting designed for optimum visibility with complete protection of materials from exposure to damaging ultraviolet light, air filtration to eliminate damaging gases and particulate matter, and temperature and humidity controls with very small fluctuations—making the environment a very stable one for the library's treasures. The project serves as a model for institutions considering renovation in older buildings and having limited budgets.

19,079
Print serials received by NAL, FY 2002.

Advancing AGRICOLA

NAL continued to add bibliographic records to its AGRICOLA (AGRICultural On-Line Access) flagship database of citations to agricultural literature, adding the 4-millionth record on July 9, 2001. Launched in 1970, AGRICOLA is now one of the largest bibliographic databases for agriculture in the world.

AGRICOLA has been available for free public use via the World Wide Web (http://agricola.nal.usda.gov/) since 1998. By the end of September 2002, more than 32,000 AGRICOLA citations to electronic publications were directly linked to full-text articles, databases, and image files available on the Web, with more added each month. Subjects encompass all aspects of agriculture and allied disciplines, including animal and veterinary sciences, entomology, plant sciences, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries, farming and farm systems, agricultural economics, extension and education, food and human nutrition, and environmental and earth sciences.

Preserving Materials Digitally

NAL participated in the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP) at the Library of Congress. This congressionally funded initiative is charged with developing national standards and a nationwide collaborative collection and long-term preservation strategy for digital materials. By serving on the NDIIPP Advisory Board, the NAL director provided vital input to the national digital planning process.

P.H. Dorsett tries a waterwheel. About 1929-1931. Dorsett-Morse Oriental Agricultural Exploration Expedition Collection. Special Collections, National Agricultural Library.

USDA's Digital Publication Preservation Program (DP3) Steering Committee began developing standards required to preserve USDA digital publications, which will be housed at NAL. DP3 was established to ensure that USDA digital publications are systematically identified, prioritized,

preserved, archived, and made accessible. The DP3 Steering Committee consists of members representing the USDA mission areas, Federal stakeholders, the agricultural research community, research libraries, and agribusiness.

NAL developed a survey instrument for identifying digital publications and guidelines for selecting digital publications for preservation (http://www.nal.usda.gov/preserve/NALDigiPresProg/worksht.shtml). In April 2000, an article published in a prestigious journal cited NAL's digital preservation selection policy as a model for what other libraries might do (Gertz, J. 2000. Selection for preservation in the digital age: An overview. Library Resources & Technical Services 44 (2), pp 97-104). NAL has already digitally preserved some of the core literature in agriculture, such as the Journal of Agricultural Research, Yearbook of Agriculture, Agronomy Journal, and articles or reprints from several USDA programs.

Rudolph A. Wendelin, best-known Smokey Bear artist, at work. Photographer unknown, 1965. U.S. Forest Service Smokey Bear Collection. Special Collections, National Agricultural Library.

During 2000-2002, NAL reviewed the preservation needs of over 10,600 linear feet of manuscripts and rare books in its collections. About 1,000 linear feet of oversize materials were rehoused, increasing their lifespan and allowing improved access. In an ongoing effort to preserve very fragile volumes from NAL's general collection, 651 books were rehoused in custom boxes to retard further physical damage. Analog efforts to preserve and increase access to deteriorating materials also continued during this period with the microfilming of 42 volumes.

NAL continued an initiative to review its extensive newspaper collection. It is being examined for condition and relevance to the scope of the library's collection and is being completely rehoused to prevent physical damage and make it more convenient to move during future redistribution projects. Deteriorating newspapers that are within the library's scope of preservation responsibility will be microfilmed.

NAL maintains the National Agricultural Literature Archive for microfilmed materials, with original negatives stored in the NAL vault at the National Underground Storage site in Boyers, Pennsylvania.

Disaster Recovery Preparedness

As part of a larger effort to improve safety, security, and emergency preparedness, an NAL-wide task force systematically reviewed and revised the library's disaster recovery plan for collections. The task force assessed the vulnerability of the collections and their storage areas to damage, developed a prioritized list for salvaging collections in the event of a disaster, and added detailed floor plans showing locations of the high-priority collections. The task force wrote recovery procedures for specific materials and updated lists of suppliers and pertinent additional resources.

1509
Publication date of NAL's earliest imprint, "Incipit tractatus de virtutibus herbarum." According to Stanley H. Johnston, Curator of Rare Books, Holden Arboretum, Kirtland, Ohio, this 1509 edition of the Latin Herbarius was printed in Italy and was written for an audience with little or no access to doctors. Though richly illustrated with 150 woodcuts, the illustrations are stylized drawings rather than exact illustrations suitable for field identification of the medicinal plants described. It is an anonymous compilation from classical, Arabic, and medieval sources published under various titles.