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Reprinted from

Symposium on

Machine Processing of

Remotely Sensed Data

June 27 - 29, 1979

The Laboratory for Applications of Remote Sensing

Purdue University West Lafayette Indiana 47907 USA

IEEE Catalog No. 79CH1430-8 MPRSD

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MACHINE PROCESSING ISSUES IN CROP TYPE IDENTIFICATION AND ESTIMATION

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Machine processing techniques which utilize remotely sensed data to estimate crop acreage have been extensively evaluated in several large scale experiments, beginning in 1972 with the Crop Identification Technology Assessment for Remote Sensing (CITARS) and more recently, the Large Area Crop Inventory Experiment (LACIE). Landsat multispectral scanner data acquired over several major global agricultural regions, has been processed using state-of-the-art technology. The performance has been quantified in two important situations (1) using insitu acquired ground observations to obtain classifier training samples; (2) using image analysis of Landsat data to obtain classifier training samples without the aid of ground observations. This collection of experiments has produced a considerable body of knowledge regarding the performance of machine processing technology under these conditions and have defined and prioritized areas for further needed research.

This paper will review and summarize the results of these experiments, discuss the nature of the problems surfaced by them, and address potential directions for current and future research.

Dr. Hall joined the Earth Observations Division at NASA JSC in 1970 upon completion of the Ph.D. in physics from the University of Houston. From 1972 to 1974, he served as technical leader for the Crop Identification Technology Assessment for Remote Sensing (CITARS) project, a joint effort involving NASA, LARS, and ERIM. In 1974, Dr. Hall was appointed to serve as Project Scientist for the Large Area Crop Inventory Experiment (LACIE) and served in that capacity through the completion of LACIE in 1978. For this role he received NASA's Medal for Exceptional Scientific Achievement. Dr. Hall currently serves as Chief Scientist for the Earth Observations Division.

1979 Machine Processing of Remotely Sensed Data Symposium