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## Advertisers' Index

Editor

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patrons unfamiliar with MARC, VTLS has developed a screen to allow users to read bibliographic information in library card format. An agent file, which resides in the Circulation module and is linked to Serials Control, merges with a form letter to produce claims. The separate Indexing module links to the main serial title within the OPAC, providing bibliographic information for all AGRICOLA citations and abstracts.

NAL has found it necessary to supplement VTLS with dBASE to attain greater control over serial orders and expenditures. Currently, the Serials Unit maintains seven separate dBASE databases. The Invoice and C.O. databases track all line item expenditures for subscription and continuation orders. Once a month the data in these two databases are merged into the Serials database that contains annual expenditures for each NAL purchased serial title. The Serials Unit also main-

tains the following dBASE databases: Cancellations; Not Kept, (for out of scope and weeded titles); Serials Vendors, (for ordering new serial titles); and Requested Serial Titles, (for titles requested, but not ordered due to lack of funds).

Approximately 22,000 serial titles are currently collected by NAL. Seven thousand of these titles are purchased; sixty-eight percent are received through NAL's extensive Gift & Exchange program. Half of the serial titles purchased are foreign. In FY 1993, the Serials Unit processed 133,000 issues for the collection. Fifteen hundred of the serial titles received at NAL are indexed within AGRICOLA, NAL's bibliographic database of English and foreign language cataloged titles (monographs and serials) and important articles on agriculture and related fields. Over three million citations are currently found within AGRICOLA, which is available on CD-ROM and online.

## Gift & Exchange

Approximately 15,000 serial titles are received by NAL through its Gift & Exchange program. G&E receives these titles from 4,700 foreign partners within 135 countries throughout the world. In addition, G&E receives titles from about 3,500 domestic gift sources. Fifty USDA serial titles are exchanged with the partners. The G&E Unit continually verifies whether its agreements are still active. It takes approximately four years to verify all foreign exchange partners.

Most of the G&E information is contained within three primary dBASE databases. The Tracking database maintains information on which titles have been requested to avoid duplicating orders sent to the exchange partners. The Exchange database contains the addresses of all foreign and domestic partners and the Title Bank contains the individual titles and holdings of all serials received on exchange.

G&E also runs two special projects for the Library. The first project, which is funded by the Food and Agricultural Organization and USDA, coordinates the sending of surplus scientific journals to the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The second project, funded by NAL, coordinates the sending of surplus monographs to the 1890 Land Grant Colleges and Tuskegee University.

## Electronic Information Initiative

NAL is currently involved in a major Electronic Information Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to fully integrate electronic procedures and materials within all aspects of the Library's functions and collection. NAL has officially announced that in January 1995 electronic media will be the preferred format for all accessed and received titles. To meet this goal, the Acquisitions & Serials Branch monitors developments in the areas of electronic journals and research databases. Members of the Branch are also involved in reviewing titles for digitization by NAL, and developing procedures for selecting, acquiring, and processing information contained within a variety of electronic formats. As we move toward the twenty-first century, the staff of NAL's Acquisitions & Serials Branch is committed to being on the forefront of developing appropriate procedures for collecting and accessing agricultural information regardless of format. ☛

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