

Literature Information and Literature Supply for Agricultural Science in Germany

WOLFRUDOLF LAUX

Biologische Bundesanstalt (BBA), Berlin-Dahlem

Abstract

Information on literature and data based upon literature, respectively, for agricultural science in Germany is guaranteed by an inter-professional organisation, the Information System on Food, Agriculture and Forestry. It is managed by the Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Forestry and by the ministries of the Federal States responsible. It brings together representatives of information institutes of the different agricultural scientific special fields, of special field libraries and of the Centre for Agricultural Documentation and Information.

Based upon national and international databases as well as upon information from research institutes of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Federal States and the universities, an efficient, professional, quick and qualified information from and about special field literature in agricultural science in Germany is safeguarded/ guaranteed.

Zusammenfassung

In Deutschland wird für die Agrarwissenschaft die Information über Literatur bzw. literaturbasierte Daten durch eine fachübergreifende Organisation, das Fachinformationssystem Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten, sichergestellt. Es wird vom Bundesministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten und von den zuständigen Ministerien der Bundesländer getragen. Es vereint Vertreter der Informationseinrichtungen der verschiedenen agrarwissenschaftlichen Fachgebiete, der fachspezifischen Bibliotheken und der Zentralstelle für Agrardokumentation und -information.

Basierend sowohl auf nationalen und Internationalen Datenbanken als auch auf den Informationen aus den Forschungseinrichtungen des Bundes, der Länder und der Universitäten ist eine effiziente, fachspezifische, schnelle und qualifizierte Information aus und über Fachliteratur der Agrarwissenschaften in Deutschland gewährleistet.

Introduction

The erroneous belief that in the Internet, information can be found on nearly all issues concerning science and research does not often convince the user of the necessity of bibliothecarial work and literature information.

This article is a survey on the achievements and services of professional institutions based on the organisation structure of agro-scientific information and documentation in the Information System on Food, Agriculture and Forestry in Germany.

I may refer to the importance of this special field at a time of growing international networking.

On the Demand for Literature Information

The general euphoria about the Internet and the resulting undoubtedly false expectations of finding information on nearly all questions and issues, including science and research has pushed bibliothecarial work and tasks of literature information and documentation into the background. Their significance seems to be fading.

A well-known cartoon shows a person sitting on an empty site between two houses. Someone inquires about the city library which was formerly situated there and receives the answer, „It's all on a disk!“ At first glance this caricature only suggests that it would be possible to dispense with library buildings. Beyond that, however, it suggests that we could dispense with the people who arranged and supplied information and even more that we could also dispense with the books and journals, the publishers, editors and printers. This should be taken very seriously. It is extremely alarming that as a consequence people who are not concerned with this matter but unfortunately are politicians and administrators in positions of responsibility, too, will no longer ask for the producers of literature and information, i.e. the authors and scientists.

It is almost impossible to differentiate between qualified and exact information and data necessary for science and research on the one hand and the unimaginable load of „information rubbish“ also to be found in the Internet on the other hand. Correct basic information cannot be distinguished from false information. Moreover, the Internet still does not guarantee an unlimited recording and supply of information. Science and research would basically be endangered if there is no solution to these problems to be found.

The Future will show whether the approved methods of bibliothecarial and documentation work will be able to cope with these tasks. For the present, however, these methods have not lost their significance for science and research (this is also true for agricultural science). They, rather, have won. Therefore, I may summarize the library and documentation activities in the field of agricultural science in Germany.

Bibliothecarial Literature Supply

The German Central Library of Agricultural Sciences in Bonn is at the centre of this field, although at present its existence is threatened. Its task is to collect German and international agricultural special field literature and, in particular, to provide the literature which is referred to in agricultural scientific databases in Germany. In order to fulfil these tasks the Central Library is supported by the Special Forestry Collection for at the University Library of Göttingen. Moreover, libraries dealing with agro-scientific aspects exist at universities and colleges with agricultural or forestry faculties as well as a greater number of special field libraries, partly situated at chemical industrial complexes (fertilisers, pesticides), partly at research institutes of the Federal Republic of Germany or its Federal States (Länder).

Germany is represented by the Central Library for Agricultural Sciences in Bonn and by the special field library of the Federal Biological Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry (plant diseases and plant protection) in the international scientific library net AGLINET which is organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome. AGLINET helps to quickly provide literature difficult to access in the field of agriculture by direct access to national professional libraries.

German libraries, both in general and in particular, ensure the supply of original literature for research and practice but also for the interested public. At the same time they offer the basis for institutions dealing with professional evaluation, production of special databases and information management in the field of agricultural science.

Institutions for Information and Documentation

These institutions are organised in the Information System on Food, Agriculture and Forestry (FIS-ELF) which is based upon an administrative agreement between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Federal States. In the FIS-ELF are the Advisory Council on Factual Data/Agricultural Informatics and the Advisory Council for Literature which I will go on to explain here (figure 1).

Heads of specialised information and documentation institutions of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Federal States as well as of the German Central Library for Agricultural Sciences and the Centre for Agricultural Documentation and Information (ZADI) in Bonn are represented in the Advisory Council on Literature. The Advisory Council's principle is work-sharing between the single special field information and documentation centres of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Federal States.

Although the system at present is not able to cover all agro-scientific special subjects, it represents the agricultural scientific information and documentation system in Germany (figure 2). There are several institutions from the private industry and other areas which are not included. Three so-called co-operation partners are working together with the members of the Advisory Council.

Figure : *Members of Advisory Council on Literature of FIS-ELF*

Federal Government

Fisheries

Bundesforschungsanstalt für Fischerei
Informations- und Dokumentationsstelle
Palmaille 9, D-22767 Hamburg

Nutrition Research

Bundesforschungsanstalt für Ernährung
Informationszentrum und Bibliotheken
Haid und Neu-Str. 9, D-76131 Karlsruhe

Nature Conservation, Landscape Management and Plant Sociology

Bundesamt für Naturschutz (BFN)
Fachgebiet Dokumentation/Bibliotheken/
Schriftleitung
Konstantinstr. 111, D-53179 Bonn

Agricultural Engineering and Building

Zentrale Informationsstelle und Bibliothek
(ZIB) - Bundesforschungsanstalt für

Landwirtschaft
Bundesallee 50, D-38116 Braunschweig

Cereal, Potato and Fat Research

Informations- und Dokumentationsstelle
Bundesanstalt für Getreide-, Kartoffel-
und Fettforschung (BAGKF)
Schützenberg 12, D-32756 Detmold

Forestry and Timber Industry

Bundesforschungsanstalt für Forst und
Holzwirtschaft (BFH)
Informations- und Dokumentationsstelle
Leuschnerstr. 91, D-21031 Hamburg

Plant Protection and Phytomedicine

Biologische Bundesanstalt für
Land- und Forstwirtschaft
Informationszentrum Phytomedizin
Königin-Luise-Str. 19, D-14195 Berlin

Dairy Science

Bundesanstalt für Milchforschung
Daten- und Informationszentrum
Zentralbibliothek u. Dokumentation
H.-Weigmann-Str. 1, D-24103 Kiel

Außenstelle Oranienburg
Bibliothek u. Dokumentation
Sachsenhausener Str. 7b
D-16515 Oranienburg

Viticulture

Dokumentation der Weinbauforschung
Bundesanstalt für Züchtungsforschung an
Kulturpflanzen - Institut für Reben-züchtung
Geilweilerhof, D-76833 Siebeldingen

Virology, Epidemiology and Bacteriology of Animals

Bundesforschungsanstalt für Viruskrank-
heiten der Tiere - Institut für Epidemio-logie
Wusterhausen - Fachinformationsstelle
Seestr. 55, D - 16868 Wusterhausen

General

Zentralstelle für Agrardokumentation
und -information (ZADI)
Villichgasse 17, D-53117 Bonn

States

Animal Production

Universitätsbibliothek Hohenheim
Dokumentationsstelle
Paracelsustr. 2, D-70593 Stuttgart

Crop Production and Plant Breeding, Agricultural Economics and Labour Management, Grassland and Forage Science

TU München
Informations- und Dokumentationszentrum
Weihenstephan, D-85350 Freising

Human Nutrition

Informations- und Dokumentationsstelle für
Ernährung - Institut für Ernährungswissen-
schaften der Justus-Liebig-Universität
Goethestr. 55, D-35390 Gießen

Fruit Growing and Processing, Fermentation Industry, Biotechnology, Beverage Technology, Sugar Technology
TU Berlin - Universitätsbibliothek
Dokumentationsstelle Lebensmittelwissen-
schaft und Biotechnologie
Straße des 17. Juni 136, D-10623 Berlin

Soil Science

Zentrum für Agrarlandschafts- und Land-
nutzungsforschung (ZALF) e. V. -
Institut für Landschaftsmodellierung
Arbeitsgruppe „Managementsystem für
Fachinformationen“,
Eberswalder Str. 84, Müncheberg

General

Deutsche Zentralbibliothek für Land-
bauwissenschaften (ZBL)
Nußallee 15a, D-53115 Bonn

Cooperation Partners

Agricultural Economy

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Landwirtschaftlich-Gärtnerische Fakultät -
Fachdokumentationsstelle Agrarökonomie
Invalidenstr. 42, D-10115 Berlin

Agricultural Engineering and Building

Kuratorium für Technik und Bauwesen in
der Landwirtschaft (KTBL)
Bartningstr. 49, D-64289 Darmstadt

Apart from the professional work-sharing among information centres, e.g. forestry, viticulture, phytomedicine etc., there is a further example of work-sharing: The Centre for Agricultural Documentation and Information (ZADI) is responsible for the management of the Information System FIS-ELF. (ZADI's activities will be reported on separately.) Furthermore, the care and supply of different databases produced by special field documentation centres and research centres in agriculture with their own technical developments or by the host DIMDI (German Society for Medicinal Documentation) are within the competence of ZADI.

The German Central Library for Agricultural Sciences has to safeguard - as mentioned above - the supply of original literature in the case of single information and documentation centres not being able to rely upon their own libraries.

The single information and documentation centres are responsible for selecting and evaluating special field literature, for professional description and classification of literature data and their recording in their own or common electronic data processing systems and databases, respectively, as well as for professional information broking and supply of information from these or other databases.

Services of Special Field Documentation

The common task of the different centres is to record and to professionally evaluate German and German-speaking special field literature, to provide information in the database ELFIS and to transfer such literature data to the Literature Information System AGRIS of the FAO in Rome.

Both databases, ELFIS with about 290,000 citations (with an annual increase of about 20,000 citations), AGRIS with about 2,700,000 citations (annual increase about 130,000 citations), are accessible via Internet. Some German agro-scientific information centres contribute in addition to AGRIS also to other international and multinational databases and information, respectively.

Examples for this co-operation are e.g. the cereals, potato and fat research by supply to FSTA (Food Science Technology Abstracts) and fisheries by assistance in ASFA (Aquatic Science and Fisheries Abstracts).

Moreover, the special field information centres often produce further specialised information services. They mainly serve the respective centre in charge, and the university or research centres, respectively. They are accessible only there, e.g. via INTRANET. Among these are e.g. databases for archives' purposes, databases on publications of the respective institution, non-public library catalogues and journal lists and different special field databases. In future, many of these too will surely be publicly accessible

The following list shows a selection of databases and services of agricultural documentation and information in Germany already accessible via Internet, hosts etc. today or in the near future:

Selection of Databases and Services

<p><u>Nature Conservation</u> DOBILIT Literature Database about 50,000 literature citations since 1980 Documentation Nature and Landscape (DNL) about 1,000 citations annually</p>	<p><u>Grapevine Breeding/Viticulture</u> ViTiS-VEA International special field literature on viticulture and ecology 33,000 citations ViTiS International Variety Catalogue Grapevine variety database with 17,000 varieties and extensive literature references</p>
<p><u>Crop Production, Plant Breeding</u> Dictionary of Genetic Special Terms 445 terms, in English WS/Diss Database Weihenstephan Dissertations with full text search and image files</p>	<p><u>Research Agricultural Landscape and Land Use</u> AGLANDIS Agro-landscape information and database system, (in the process of organisation)</p>
<p><u>Plant Protection and Plant Diseases</u> PHYTOMED International literature on plant protection 452,000 literature citations 1964-1996 PHYTOMED-Select German and German-speaking plant protection literature, international monographs and congresses about 15,000 literature citations since 1997</p>	<p><u>Fruit Growing</u> Old Register Fruit Growing 17,000 literature citations from the 18th century until 1980, (cardfile system)</p>
<p><u>Cereals, Potato and Fat Research</u> Information Service Cereals Processing 4 disks annually Food Science Technology Abstracts supply of German literature</p>	<p><u>Fisheries</u> Aquatic Science and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA) (at present 690,000 literature citations) German contribution about 2,000 (= 6%) literature citations annually Baltic Seaweb 11,000 data units for measuring data and literature on the Baltic Sea (incl. Baltic Monitoring Programme)</p>
<p><u>Nutrition</u> Bibliography on Radiation-Treated Food 130,000 literature citations since 1955</p>	

Persons working in particular in the field of agricultural science also exchange information and experiences in scientific associations.

The Society for Librarianship and Documentation in Agriculture (GBDL) protects the interests of agricultural librarians and documentalists. These are partly active also in other professional associations, e.g. the German Society for Information Science and Information Practice (DGI), the Association of Special Libraries (ASpB), the Society for Informatics in Agriculture (GIL) and other bibliothecarial institutions and associations. These societies also have the aim to enable the participation of those who are not working with public institutions, and thus who are not directly represented in the above-mentioned advisory councils of the Information System FIS-ELF.