

THE ANIMAL WELFARE INFORMATION CENTER OF THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY

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It has been a once in a life time opportunity to develop a total program that did not exist before, and I have been amply rewarded to have been involved in the development and management of the Animal Welfare Information Center (AWIC). AWIC seems to have found a niche not only in the U.S. but in the world at large. In addition to receiving information requests from abroad, our newsletter goes to researchers, libraries and government officials in 41 countries. But let's start with the raw materials that went into the AWIC program. There are four main ingredients - (1) the 1985 Amendments to the Animal Welfare Act; (2) USDA's National Agricultural Library; (3) a dedicated staff of 4 professionals, a secretary, a student aid and myself; (4) a group of interested professionals: researchers, veterinarians, program administrators that have provided good advice at critical times.

THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT AMENDMENTS

The Animal Welfare Information Center (AWIC) was established at the National Agricultural Library (NAL) in 1986 as a result of the 1985 amendments to the Animal Welfare Act (PL 99-189). In the Act, the U.S. Congress mandated that:

"The Secretary (of the U.S. Department of Agriculture) shall establish an information service at the National Agricultural Library. Such service

shall in cooperation with the National Library of Medicine, provide information:

- (1) pertinent to employee training;
- (2) which could prevent unintended duplication of animal experimentation as determined by the research facility;
- (3) on improved methods of animal experimentation, including methods which could
 - reduce or replace animal use; and
 - minimize pain and distress to animals, such as anesthetic and analgesic procedures.

These areas of interest as stated by the Congress are still the cornerstone of the scope of the AWIC program today.

NAL AND AWIC

I would like to describe the intertwined relationship between the 11 Information Centers and NAL. Information Centers exist within the NAL physical and administrative structure. The Center concept was developed within the Library in order to better serve the diverse but often narrow-focused subject requirements of much of the NAL clientele. A few of the other Centers serve unique user groups, e.g. aquaculture, biotechnology, water quality, etc. Each Center's staff members

have subject expertise, participate in outreach and networking activities, develop publications and participate in projects tailored to the needs of the user groups, Center staff are also actively involved in selecting materials for the NAL collection. Since the user group may have specific needs, unique activities, programs, support services and staff responsibilities have developed. I will try and give you an idea of the program, structure, activities and publications developed to serve the AWIC patron. Next I would like to say a few words about NAL.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY

The Library facility is located about 12 miles north of Washington D.C. on the grounds of the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center at Beltsville, MD. The Research Center is part of USDA's, Agricultural Research Service. Currently, NAL houses over 2 million items including books, journals, newsletters, conference proceedings, reports, maps, microforms, slides, video recordings, films, posters and rare manuscripts. The scope of the collection reflects published materials that have and continue to support the activities, research and regulatory responsibilities of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Obviously, the collection is strong in what is traditionally considered agricultural subjects-food and fiber production. It is also strong in applied veterinary science, animal and human nutrition, forestry, natural resources, etc.

Much of the collection is available to those not affiliated with USDA through inter-library loan. Some document delivery services to the international community are provided via AGLINET.

This audience may be interested in one of all of the several fact sheets available that explain in detail what services are available, who is served and how to request service. They are listed below:

- 1 *Document Delivery Services Available to Foreign Libraries, Information Centers and Commercial Organizations*
- 2 *Availability of Documents*
- 3 *Guidelines for Requesting materials*
- 4 *Guide to Services*

The facility is open to the public Monday through Friday, and closed on Federal holidays. Formal tours are available to visitors on request. If any of you are in the Washington D.C. area, I hope that you will stop by and see us.

ANIMAL WELFARE INFORMATION CENTER

As an Information Center within NAL, AWIC's role is to provide subject specific reference services, bibliographies and listings of relevant documents, establish the subject scope for acquisitions and indexing, conduct outreach activities and interact with user groups. In turn, AWIC relies on NAL for the purchase and maintenance of the subject relevant part of the collection, lending services and other processes, such as the indexing of documents for the AGRICOLA database, that ensure user access. Because of these internal coordinated efforts, the substantial resources of the Library enable the AWIC staff to supply information on a broad array of subjects, even though the main thrust of AWIC's subject responsibilities are determined by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).

You might be interested to know the subject areas that we often address: veterinary methodologies/techniques, ethical, political and legal issues related to the welfare of animals, resources of information, regulations regarding animal care and transport. We often utilize databases as resources to answer such questions. Those that we routinely use are MEDLINE, BIOSIS, LIFE SCIENCES, CAB, and last but not least, AGRICOLA. AGRICOLA is produced by NAL staff, and the following information may be of interest to you.

AGRICOLA

Another NAL sponsored activity that is a very important support activity for the information centers is AGRICOLA. Because the database is produced by NAL, I would like to say a few words about it. AGRICOLA, an electronic version of the *Bibliography of Agriculture*, was started in 1970. AGRICOLA (Agricultural On-Line Access) currently contains over 3 million citations to reports, books, journal articles, audiovisuals, posters, etc covering agriculture and related subjects. Approximately one-fifth of those 3 million records are devoted to citations on animal production, laboratory animal science, veterinary medicine and animal welfare.

Briefly, subjects indexed include: anesthesia, analgesia, euthanasia, training and education of technicians and investigators, transportation and acquisition of animals, species husbandry, animal behavior, environmental factors affecting animals, laboratory animal management, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees, regulations and legislation concerning the humane treatment of animals, philosophies of animal welfare/rights and alternatives to the use of animals in research, testing and education.

AGRICOLA and MEDLINE, produced by the National Library of Medicine, overlap somewhat, but there are many types of non-referred materials being added to the NAL collection and ultimately the AGRICOLA database, that are not collected by NLM (e.g. training materials, reports, course syllabi, etc). This somewhat coordinated division of effort expands the resources available to the user group.

Note that AGRICOLA is currently available through DIALOG (Knight-Ridder Information, Inc) as files 10 and 110. File 110 is the early file of citations generated in 1970-1978. File 10 contains citations entered from 1979 to the present. (I use the term "entered", because the year of entry does not necessarily

equal the publication year) The database is also available commercially on compact disc through Silver Platter. If anyone would like more specifics regarding access, please contact me.

AWIC SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

AWIC provides a number of services to patrons, but the ones that are probably the most interesting to you are reference, referral and AWIC generated publications.

Reference

Reference services are available to anyone who contacts the Center be they national or international. However, most AWIC users are biomedical researchers, veterinarians, animal technicians and caretakers, USDA regulatory staff, facility managers, academics, organization personnel, curators in zoological parks, librarians and students.

Some queries may only require a quick answer, a suggested general resource, reference to an article and/or a free limited database search. Other requests require an expanded database search. In the case of a large search, the patron has the option to pay NAL for a more comprehensive database search on a cost recovery basis.

Databases routinely utilized by the AWIC staff include the DIALOG files (numbers in parentheses are the file numbers in the DIALOG system), AGRICOLA (10, 110), MEDLINE (154, 155), EMBASE (72, 172, 173), BIOSIS PREVIEWS (5, 55) CAB ABSTRACTS (50, 53) and Life Sciences (76). Under some circumstances, computer, legal or other peripheral subject-matter databases are utilized.

Since many organizations and institutions have full-service libraries with the capability of multi-database searching, AWIC staff are a back-up resource, providing materials, other information resources and

advice to librarians. For those organizations/individuals with limited information resources, AWIC can provide more comprehensive services.

AWIC staff regularly maintain and use a variety of subject-related vertical files that include: selected articles, copies of Federal bills and legislation, published materials from a variety of organizations, subject files of acquired books and audiovisuals, and clippings from newspapers and magazines. These files provide a source of personal contacts, information about related organizations, and serve as a quick reference to current events and popular animal-related topics. They are often used by local high school and college students, researchers, and a number of free lance authors.

AWIC publications

Several types of publications are generated by the AWIC staff. Most publications fall into the following NAL publication series: *Quick Bibliography (OB)*, *Special Reference Brief (SRB)*, *AWIC Series*, *Fact Sheet*. *The Animal Welfare Information Center Newsletter* is a free quarterly newsletter published by the staff. A brief description of these publications follows.

Quick Bibliography (OB). *OB's* are downloaded from the most current file of AGRICOLA. They contain approximately 300 recent bibliographic references to a portion of the topical literature. The citations are listed in alphabetical order by title and may have abstracts. Author and subject indices are provided as additional access points. *OB's* produced by the AWIC staff include animal disease models, issues regarding the use of animals and welfare issues of livestock animals.

Special Reference Brief (SRB). When there is limited subject coverage in AGRICOLA, the *SRB format* is used. *SRB's* are more comprehensive because they are produced from multiple sources—electronic, manual and recommendations

by experts and are not limited by the publication dates of the documents. The *SRB format* includes a brief introduction to the topic, a selected listing of references organized by category and an author listing. They can contain additional non-bibliographic information such as relevant organizations, other information resources, etc. There are no limits on either numbers of citations or age of the cited documents. All *SRB's* are reviewed by a highly respected expert in the field. Topics covered have included euthanasia, exercise for dogs, various toxicity testing methods and animal models of disease.

AWIC Series. Early in the development of the AWIC program, feedback from user groups indicated that some non-bibliographic information resources such as listings of the audiovisuals, Federal legislation, computer simulation models for teaching, etc were needed. Since these types of publications did not fall into an established series, the *AWIC Series* was started to accommodate the diverse nature of the information. These publications are also generated from many sources.

Fact Sheets. *Fact Sheets* contain information intended to help a patron use the Center more effectively. They are usually limited to one or two pages and designed to answer questions that are often asked about the services of AWIC.

Animal Welfare Information Center Newsletter. This free quarterly newsletter contains articles by guest authors on topics related to various animal care and use issues. Each issue includes a listing of newly introduced Federal legislation, recently released AWIC publications and upcoming meetings. In the past there have been articles on environmental enrichment for gum feeding animals, the psychological issues of people who use animals in research, and how to scientifically determine animal well-being, etc.

Efforts continue to address new and old

welfare issues through either new publications or updates of old publications.

We are beginning to utilize Internet at a way to disseminate information, and currently a majority of the AWIC publications are available electronically from the NETVET World Wide Web site. NETVET is maintained by Dr Kenneth Boschert of Washington University in St. Louis.

At the present time, all AWIC publications are free either in paper or electronically. It should also be noted that AWIC-produced publications are not under copyrighted and may be reproduced without permission.

Referrals

AWIC staff have developed an extensive network with subject experts and organizations active in the area of animal care and use. In order to adequately answer some patrons' questions, AWIC staff may recommend that a patron tap into the expertise of respected individuals and groups. In all cases for security's sake, the recommended expert/organization has agreed to be a resource.

Outreach Activities

To ensure that all of the regulated users know of the products, services and other program activities, the AWIC staff engage in a variety of outreach-oriented activities such as

- presentations at seminars and conferences such as this;
- exhibiting at a variety of major conferences and annual meetings where brochures are distributed, questions are answered, and demonstrations of topical electronic documents, or software programs are given;
- sharing of information and establishing linkages with other groups both here and abroad;

- participating on various USDA and/or governmental or non-governmental committees;
- provide articles for a variety of publications on request;
- host visitors and/or visiting scholars.

Special activities

For several years now, AWIC has been conducting a hands on workshop *Meeting the Information Requirements of the Animal Welfare Act*. This workshop is offered to all those interested in the information requirements regarding the 3 R's—reduction, replacement and refinement as well as improved methods for painful procedures, and duplicative research. It is offered at NAL 4 times/year. In the workshop, participants are introduced to the history of animal protection federal legislation, the federal regulations regarding information requirements, application of the 3 R's, resources available, searching databases, and hands-on computer searching of relevant DIALOG databases. The staff also conduct the workshop off site on a cost recovery basis. To date presentations have been done at major universities, pharmaceutical companies, hospitals, organizations, etc. At some point, we are considering offering a shortened version of the workshop via videoconferencing. I would like to mention that we had a participant from Germany in the December class.

AWIC has several cooperative ventures with international partners that are formalized with Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). Note that such agreements do not include an exchange of monies but an exchange of expertise, hard work, etc. Currently, we have 2 such agreements. I would like to mention that we are always interested in collaborating with others, so if you have any ideas that you would like to pursue, please feel free to contact me.

The first one, that I would like to mention, is an agreement with UFAW (Universities for Animal Welfare) of the UK. Both groups have agreed to collaborate to produce a publication on enrichment for a

wide variety of *animals* - dogs, cats, farm animals, rodents, ferrets, birds, and rabbits. This publication is expected to be completed this year. AWIC will distribute the publication in the Americas and UFAW will distribute in the Eastern Hemisphere.

In April of 95, we entered into a MOU with the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. We both agree to exchange publications that are produced in our respective countries, to potentially produce some joint publications, and consider other possible collaborations.

A new initiative that we are very excited about is the production of a CD-ROM that will have a large number of the documents that apply to animal welfare and care. These include U.S. regulatory documents, guidelines, best practices, important publications, etc. This effort is being supported by the National Institutes of Health, the National Aeronaut and Space Administration, Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control, and USDA. Currently, there will be little international information in the CD, but we are interested in including such documents from other countries.

When you are in the U.S. please stop by and see us or give us a call.

REFERENCES

Animal Welfare Act - Title 7 U.S.C. 2131-2156 as amended by PL-99-198. 1985.