AGRICULTURE COMPUTING NETWORK (AGNET)

On August 21, 1974, Vice Chancellor Acker appointed a faculty committee to delineate the potential use of computers and computer terminals in the research, teaching, and extension programs of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The committee concluded that there was a potential for increased computer usage in all phases of IANR activities and that the need to provide computer access to research and extension staff at outstate locations was particularly acute. The committee recommended that an Institute-wide agriculture computing network be established to serve Institute computing needs and that as a first step in providing expanded computer access at outstate locations a pilot project be established to assess the cost-benefit relationships of increased computer usage.

With funds from the current IANR budget and the University Computer Network, and a grant from the Nebraska Bankers Association, a pilot project was begun in February at the Panhandle Station. Equipment at the Station includes three dial-up computer terminals (two portable and one permanent). The terminals can be used to access the CMS interactive time-sharing system on the IBM 370 computer in the Statehouse or the NUROS system on the IBM 360 computer in Nebraska Hall. Several workshops have been conducted by Dr. Tom Thompson and Dr. Jim Kendrick to acquaint area staff with the use of available computer programs and to discuss the development of additional program modules.

In addition to the terminals at Scottsbluff, there are nine dial-up computer terminals as well as batch (card input) computing capabilities available in the Statistical Laboratory on the Lincoln campus. These terminals are available to all staff and students and are being used extensively in the teaching programs in both agriculture and home economics.

In March, Vice Chancellor Acker appointed an AGNET Advisory Committee consisting of Dr. John Weihing, Chairman; Dr. Will Schutz, Vice Chairman; Dr. Tom Thompson, Dr. Jim Kendrick, Mr. Mick Everton, Dr. Ivan Rush, Mr. Ron Gaddis, Dr. Don Swoboda, Dr. Larry Bitney, Dr. Richard Douglass, and Dr. Roberta Sward. The committee is charged with coordinating and reflecting user needs as the network develops, evaluation of the pilot project, and monitoring of the role of AGNET in the Institute. Users who wish to know more about the computing capabilities available in AGNET or who have computing needs that are not currently being satisfied are invited to contact the committee for assistance. There are presently more than twenty major program modules available under the interactive CMS system and more are under development.

Although interactive computing has been available for a relatively short time, users have found a wide variety of applications in research, extension, and teaching. After a rather late start, Institute staff now have an opportunity to utilize computing as a tool in more effectively performing their assigned tasks.

W. M. Schutz
PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Clark, Ralph B. - Professor of Agronomy, ARS (courtesy appointment)
Haderlie, Lloyd C. - Assistant Professor of Agronomy (new appointment)
Hergert, Gary W. - Assistant Professor of Agronomy (new appointment)

Johnson, Bruce B. - Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics (new appointment)
Leviticus, Louis I. - Prof. of Ag. Eng.--Tractor Testing (appointment)
Steinegger, Donald H. - Assoc. Prof. of Hort. and Ext. Horticulturist (new appt.)

GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

Klopfenstein, T. - Animal Science - Grass Valley Farms $5,000
Klopfenstein, T. - Animal Science - Eli Lilly and Company 2,000
Lavy, T. L. - Agronomy - Office of WRR, U. S. Dept. of Interior 40,687
Rehm, G. W. - Agronomy (Northeast Station) - U. S. Gypson Co. 3,000
Rosenberg, N. J. - Agricultural Engineering - National Science Foundation 95,000
Twiehaus, M. J. - Veterinary Science - Burns-Biotec Laboratory 2,650

GENERAL NOTES

1. You have each received Vice Chancellor Acker's letter announcing that Dr. J. L. Adams will be moving to a different assignment from the position of Director of Cooperative Extension on July 1. The ten years of Jack's vigorous leadership in extension has indeed been characterized by marked progress in development of personnel and programs in extension and close collaboration with the Experiment Station. We will look forward to working with him in some other function when he has completed the recovery from his health problem.

2. Ground has been broken for the Production Agriculture/Veterinary Technology building at Curtis and for the Plant Materials facility at North Platte.

3. The East Campus Union building bids have been received and are substantially over original budget estimates. What happens now is not certain but efforts have been initiated to increase the funding to permit letting the contract. Funds involved are not from general-state revenue.

4. It seems that the number of modest but important industrial grants to Station staff and projects may be dropping off some. On the other hand major grant opportunities from federal agencies appear improved. In either case staff efforts in procurement of grants are important to sustaining this significant supplementation of appropriated funds for our programs.

5. Schnieder on safety—Unlike the situation with many industrial jobs, agricultural work changes throughout the season. Thus, familiarity with jobs is less and changing safety requirements require more attention. Many blunder into new jobs without safety forethought. This can lead to personal injury and/or equipment damage.

6. The University has requested bids for selling 240 acres of land north of Havelock and west of 84th. These receipts will be used to develop swine research facilities at the Field Laboratory and permit completing the Animal Science transfer out of the Havelock area. This then will vacate the land south of Adams Street for subsequent sale.

7. Don't let yesterday use up too much of today.
Journal Articles  (contact authors for more information)


Journal Abstracts (contact authors for more information)


BULLETINS PRINTED


