

## **Review: Agro-Librex; Agro-Agen; Agro-Konf: Bibliographic Database**

By The University of Agriculture Library in Poznan

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University of Agriculture Library in Poznan. *Agro-Librex; Agro-Agen; Agro-Konf: Bibliographic Data Base* (3rd ed.). Poznan, Poland: Main Library, University of Agriculture, 2000. US\$100. To order: Main Library, 45 Witosa Street, 61-693 Poznan, Poland, TEL: 4861-8487809. CD-ROM database and searching program; Hardware requirements: Windows 95/98: 16Mb RAM, 8-bit color display, 15Mb free hard-disk space, CDS/ISIS software, and CD-ROM drive.

The AGRO database is the largest Polish index to literature on biology, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, animal science, veterinary, food, wood, technology, and environmental science. One *Agro* CD-ROM contains three separate databases: *Agro-Librex*, *Agro-Agen*, and *Agro-Konf*. The first database, *Agro-Librex*, provides bibliographic citations from more than 600 Polish periodicals. The second index, *Agro-Agen*, offers citations from around one hundred periodicals published in English. The third database, *Agro-Konf*, makes available citations from more than 8,000 published conference proceedings. The entire *Agro* database, with over 128,000 bibliographic records, is updated quarterly and produced by librarians from the Main Library and Information Center of the Agriculture University in Poznan.

Micro CDS/ISIS advanced non-numerical information storage and retrieval software is used to create the *Agro* database. Extensive keyword indexing permits users to search the three databases by authors, titles of articles, journals, conference name and place, and keywords. The retrieved citation presents detailed information on title, author, journal title, volume, issue, year, pages, publisher, the main words used in the article, contact addresses for authors or publishers, and language. The *Agro* database does not contain abstracts but each citation includes carefully selected keywords that represent the main concept of the indexed record.

The index has been produced since 1992, when Wlodzimierz Golab, director of the Agriculture University Library, convinced the staff about the importance of creating an electronic tool for locating Polish literature in all areas of agriculture from agricultural administration, laws and legislation, regulations, economics, education and training, engineering, products to horticulture, animal science, entomology, aquatic science, fisheries, food science, food products, forestry, geography, meteorology, climatology, history, home economics, human ecology, household textiles and clothing,

human nutrition, natural resources, pesticides, plant science, pollution, soil science, rural sociology, and rural development. The rationale for creating Polish bibliographic database was simple-patrons could locate English and German citations in all the above subjects but were not able to locate Polish sources. In the early 1990s, most electronic databases available in Polish libraries were created abroad and provided citations to sources not widely available in Poland. By publishing, in June of 1992, the first CD-ROM version of the *Agro-Librex* database, the staff of Poznan Agriculture Library fulfilled the need for a Polish agriculture index. It indexed Polish journal and popular magazine articles, and university and agency publications. In 1995, the *Agro-Agen* database was added, which indexed Polish periodicals in English or in Polish with an English abstract. The *Agro-Konf* database was created in 1997 and it indexed all Polish conference proceedings.

Since 1992 the *Agro* index has become one of the most popular Polish tools for locating periodical and conference literature on agriculture, biology, and related sciences. Today it is a valuable resource for students, faculty, and researchers in these fields, and acts as the "Polish *Agricola*" in many libraries. The *Agro* index, does not add 18, 000 records per year as *Agricola*<sup>1</sup> does, but, after all, it is created and produced by a medium-size library. The library has limited resources in terms of people, equipment, and funds, but does not have limited vision and ideas. The *Agro* bibliographic database is a prime example of how a good idea, created and cherished by dedicated people with limited resources, can provide a very useful product for others.

These days, when the CD-ROM format is becoming slowly obsolete, the creators of the *Agro* index are switching slowly to the online version. Demos of three parts of the database are available; the *Agro-Librex* at: <http://bg.au.poznan.pl/agro-cn.htm>, *Agro-Agen* at: <http://bg.au.poznan.pl/agen-cn.htm>, and *Agro-Konf* at: <http://bg.au.poznan.pl/konf-cn.htm>. Perhaps it is a great time for the *Agro* bibliographic databases to add abstracts and the full text of indexed articles to the citations.

## Endnote

<sup>1</sup> More information on *Agricola* is available at:  
[http://www.nal.usda.gov/general\\_info/agricola/agricola.html](http://www.nal.usda.gov/general_info/agricola/agricola.html)

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