

BLIS semester II  
(paper – 5)  
Reference Sources & Services

Topic – **AGRIS**  
e-content

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## **AGRIS**

### **(International Information System for the Agricultural Sciences and Technology)**

AGRIS, the International Information System for the Agricultural Sciences and Technology, was started in 1974 by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations. AGRIS became fully operational in 1975 with the first issue of AGRINDEX and was modeled on the INIS pattern to facilitate information exchange and to bring together the world literature dealing with all aspects of agriculture. Its main aim is “to build an information system in the field of agriculture science and technology and related subjects”. It is a system of collaborative network of agricultural institutions of the world.

#### **Objectives :-**

AGRIS was established with the following objectives:

- “Creation of a single, comprehensive, current inventory of world-wide agricultural literature reflecting agricultural research results,

food production, rural development and to help users to identify problems concerning all aspects of world food supply,

- Meeting the information requirements of users requiring agricultural information by offering specialised subject retrieval services, providing documents on request, current awareness and selective dissemination of information services, and
- Collaborating with new and existing specialised secondary information services so as to increase efficiency and eliminate unnecessary duplication.”

### **Subject areas :-**

The subject areas of the AGRIS include various aspects of agriculture, including forestry, food, environment, animal sciences, aquatic sciences and fisheries, human nutrition and all other aspects related to agricultural sciences from participating countries all over the world. AGRIS centres input information from periodical literature, monographs, reports, patents, standards, etc. on standardised data input formats. The covered literature also includes unique material such as unpublished scientific and technical reports, theses, conference papers, government publications, and more.

### **Functions :-**

Some of the functions that are essential for the AGRIS Resource Centres are:

- “adoption and implementation of standards for cataloguing and indexing agricultural information, especially the categorisations schemes, thesauri and the development of standard exchange formats;
- collection, recording and organisation of non-conventional and conventional scientific and technical literature relevant to AGRIS which is produced in the region;

- creation of digital repositories for literature and other types of related scientific and technical information produced in their area, in consultation with FAO; and
- maximum use of Internet-based tools for data processing and dissemination.”

Other areas where efforts have been made include:

- FAO and AGRIS Information Centre/Website
- Improving Access to Documentation on Science and Technology
- Strengthening and Establishment of Standards
- The Central AGRIS Website/Database
- Deployment of New Methods and WebAGRIS Tools

### **Activities:-**

#### **WebAGRIS**

It covers the current and ongoing agricultural information projects in AGRIS and CARIS and is considered as networking for AGRIS in the future. The target users are those that require information related to all areas of agricultural and rural development.

#### **AGRIS AP**

AGRIS Application Profile (AP) gives the Guidelines for Description of Information Objects for the International Information System on Agricultural Sciences and Technology. This document contains specifications about the metadata that should be exchanged and disseminated through the AGRIS system.

### **Electronic Discussion Forum**

This is the discussion group workspace for the exchange of ideas on using the AGRIS AP, WebAGRIS. The ideal target audience consists of coordinators and facilitators of established or incipient communities, as well as groups of individuals with shared interests in agricultural and rural development.

### **AGROVOC**

AGROVOC is the multilingual international agricultural thesaurus. The terms are in English, French and Spanish. Each key term included in the AGROVOC is either a descriptor or a non-descriptor. AGROVOC is also available online referred to as AGROVOC Online.

### **AGRIS Information Products:-**

Various products of AGRIS available from the AGRIS Secretariat are:

- AGRIS and CARIS on CD – This includes the bibliographic references, CARIS Project Data, the AGROVOC Thesaurus and the FAO Catalogue.
- AGRIS Manuals – Several manual of AGRIS are available for immediate downloading for use by the resource centres.
- AGRIS and CARIS - FTP site - Makes available AGRIS and CARIS data.
- FAO Documentation – Food and Agricultural Organisation documents starting from 1980 to 2000 are available with complete text from the document repository of AGRIS.