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# ***Agricultural Knowledge Sharing in the Philippines***

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## **Access to Philippine Agricultural Knowledge**

The Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sector forms a vital component of the Philippine economy as it accounts for 12.13% of the Philippines' gross national product (Gross, 2011). Although there are many agricultural research institutions in the country, the products of research from these institutions are not widely disseminated and utilized. One has to search individual web sites, library catalogs and international databases like ***Agricola, AGRIS, CAB Abstracts*** to avail of this wealth of information. And the latter do not cover every technical agricultural research publication produced in the Philippines.

Up to 1991, the monthly ***Philippine Agricultural Bibliography*** of the University of the Philippines at Los Banos, linked Philippine agricultural literature and agricultural scientists worldwide. Since then, there has been no vehicle to enable access to Philippine agricultural research output. There is an urgent need to capture Philippine agricultural knowledge and to make it accessible via a central platform so that users may be aware of them at the right time.

The disparate agricultural information tools which need to be searched individually result in costly duplication of efforts. Scientists normally fail to find all of the most relevant information.

The obstacles to the smooth flow of information are as follows:

1. Lack of awareness of what exists in each agricultural institution;
2. The need to cultivate the culture of sharing among local scientists
3. The scattered initiatives in information sharing resulting in waste of time and resources
4. Lack of a central electronic database that captures most, if not all, of the agricultural research output in the country.
5. Late publication of data
6. Inadequate IT infrastructure and varied software used by existing databases
7. Lack of interoperability among existing databases
8. Need for staff who are knowledgeable in database management
9. Limited finances to update and sustain these databases

## **Agricultural Knowledge Providers in the Philippines**

- 1. PhilAgriNet** stands for Philippine Agricultural Information Services Network. Created in 2004, the network aims to bridge the gap between information and researchers by creating a web-accessible database, now available at <http://webagris.uplb.edu.ph>. Specifically, PhilAgriNet aims to link member institutions as well as other researchers for efficient scholarly

access to agricultural knowledge. Content development, however, has been very slow owing to the following obstacles: inadequate IT infrastructure, software problems, lack of expertise on the part of staff assigned to manage databases, and the limited budget. PhilAgriNet has conducted a good number of capacity building initiatives with the support of FAO and the local Bureau of Agricultural Research and continues to do so regularly. It is now focused on enriching the PhilAgriNet database, in order to meet the needs of local and international researchers.

2. Web Sites of government agencies related to agriculture, e.g. Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Bureaus attached to the Department of Agriculture, and the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Resources Research (PCARRD)
3. Web sites of universities offering agriculture in their curriculum, e.g. University of the Philippines at Los Banos, Benguet State University, Leyte State University, etc.

### Some Examples of Agricultural Information Providers in the Philippines

Database Name	Information/ Data types	Subject Scope	Data Content	Ownership	Standards. Database architectures, models, used
PhilAgriNet (open to the public)	Documents	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries	5,000 +	PhilAgriNet; accessible to the public	AgroVoc, WebAGRIS
CountrySTAT Philippines <a href="http://countrystat.bas.gov.ph/">http://countrystat.bas.gov.ph/</a>	Statistics	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries	No data available	Bureau of Agricultural Statistics; accessible to the public	FAO standards
<a href="#">Farmers Information and Technology Services Information System (FITS IS)</a>	Names of experts and farmers, addresses, documents, images	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries	208,059 as of May 25, 2011	Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD) (accessible to the public)	Uses MySQL; no standards used
DA-BAR databases:	Projectper	Agriculture	No	Bureau of	No

R& D Projects; R & D Manpower; Directory of Scholars & Grantees; Institutional development grants <a href="http://www.bar.gov.ph/">http://www.bar.gov.ph/</a>	sonal data, grants	re, forestry, fisheries research ; agricultural scientists	data available	Agricultural Research, Department of Agriculture, Philippines (accessible to the public)	standards used
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While international as well as Philippine rice literature is adequately covered by the rice database (IRRI, 2011) of the International Rice Research Institute, other aspects of agriculture need a similar vehicle for scholarly access to agricultural information. But this tool should be one that focuses on Philippine agricultural research output on all aspects of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, and must be comprehensive enough to cover most, if not all, of the products of research of agricultural institutions in the country. Barring many obstacles, PhilAgriNet can champion this by transforming its database into the most comprehensive and up-to-date electronic resource available to agricultural researchers worldwide.

#### References:

Gross national product (GNP) by origin. 2011.

[http://www.bsp.gov.ph/statistics/spei\\_pub/Table%2042.pdf](http://www.bsp.gov.ph/statistics/spei_pub/Table%2042.pdf)

IRRI. Library and Documentation Center. 2011. Rice bibliography.

<http://ricelib.irri.cgiar.org:81/screens/opacmenu.html>

PhilAgriNet . 2011. <http://www.bar.gov.ph/philagrinet/about.htm>

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