

## Agriculture Research Guide

[Find Books](#)

[Find Articles](#)

[Suggested Websites](#)

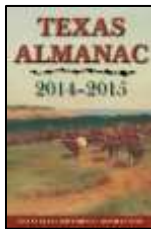
[Research Process Guide](#)

### I. Find Books

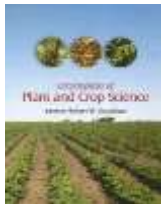
#### A) Reference Materials: Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, etc.

Reference materials offer background information and broad overviews of subjects. This information is often helpful in narrowing your topic and in selecting a specific area to explore further. Reference materials such as almanacs and yearbooks also provide quick access to statistical data.

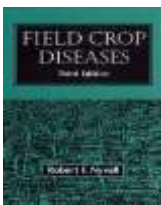
##### 1) Suggested Titles:



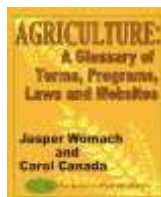
[Texas Almanac](#). College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 2016. (REF AY 311.D3 T5 2016-2017) Offers access to current data on crop production, farming income, and livestock management.



[Encyclopedia of Plant and Crop Science](#). New York, NY: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 2004. (REF SB 45.E486 2004) Provides information in almost all areas of crop production including insect management, crop diseases, weed control, seed production, etc.



[Field Crop Diseases](#). Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1999. (REF SB 731.N94 1999) Provides causes, symptoms, and management of diseases in 24 of the most important field crops.



[Agriculture: A Glossary of Terms, Programs, Laws, and Websites](#). Huntington, NY: Nova Science Publisher, Inc. 2000. (REF S 411.W66 2000)

#### B) [Library Catalog](#): Print and E-book Collections

The online catalog offers convenient access to titles housed at all VC library locations. At the catalog screen, select "Search the Catalog" to locate titles or subjects that match your terms such as "rangeland management."

**E-books:** To search only for titles available electronically, from the "Search the Catalog" page, select "Online" as the desired location. Use the dropdown menu to choose your search method (author, subject terms, etc), then enter your search term (ex. Wildlife conservation).

*Helpful feature:* While viewing a book, select the "Search" tab to bring up a search bar which will allow you to locate a word or phrase within the entire content of the book.

### C) Browse the Collection

Physically browse the agricultural titles shelved by call number in the following Library of Congress Classification ranges:

S: Agriculture (General)

SF: Animal Culture

SB: Plant Culture

SH: Fish Culture and Fisheries

SD: Forestry

SK: Hunting

## II. Find Articles

### A) Article Databases

1. [Academic Search Complete](#): This database searches numerous journals to offer full text articles on nearly all subjects including agriculture. Coverage includes the following journals:

- <i>Advances in Agriculture and Botanic</i> s	- <i>Precision Agriculture</i>
- <i>American Journal of Experimental Agriculture</i>	- <i>Crops</i>
- <i>Journal of Agronomy and Crop Science</i>	- <i>Journal of Farm Economics</i>
- <i>International Journal of Agriculture, Environment &amp; Biotechnology</i>	- <i>Energy in Agriculture</i>

and over one hundred others. Select from a number of different limiters to customize your search, including cover stories, publication dates, page numbers, etc.

*Citing the articles:* The database offers formatting rules with examples for citing the articles selected. For assistance in citing the articles, select the "Help" link in the upper right corner of the screen, scroll to view "Citation Styles" in the left menu bar, and then choose the documentation style of your choice.

2. [Agricola](#): U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Library, which contains hundreds of links to both books and articles in the field of agricultural literature.

While these books and articles are not available electronically, an Interlibrary Loan (ILL) request can be submitted to the Vernon College Library for desired materials.

[In-house Magazines and Journals](#): *The Cattleman*, *Progressive Farmer*, and *Western Horseman* are all available in the reference section of the Wright Library, located on the Vernon campus.

### **III. Suggested Websites**

[American Society of Agronomy](#): Examining how soil and crops interact, agronomy is a science and a practice that looks at agriculture from an integrated, holistic perspective.

[Agricultural Marketing Service @ USDA Portal](#): Administers programs that facilitate the efficient, fair marketing of U.S. agricultural products, including food, fiber, and specialty crops.

[ATTRA-National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service](#): An agency committed to providing high value information and technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, Extension agents, educators, and others involved in sustainable agriculture in the United States.

[Agricultural Statistics](#): Published annually to provide a reliable reference for agricultural production, supplies, consumption, facilities, costs, and returns. Annual editions from 1994 to present are available in PDF format.

## The Research Process

- 1) Select a topic that you find interesting and appropriate for the assignment.
- 2) Review reference sources such as subject encyclopedias for background information to help focus or narrow the search.

For example, students interested in **integrated pest management** may consult the *Encyclopedia of Plant and Crop Science* for ideas in narrowing the focus to a particular type of IPM program such as **host plant resistance**.

- 3) Restate the topic as a question. Inquiry is at the heart of the research process, a quest to locate information which answers questions and leads researchers to a greater understanding of the topic.

Restating the topic as a question will help in:

- Locating information that is useful and relevant to the primary focus or thesis of your research.
- Identifying the keywords or phrases to use in the search statement.

Example: How has **host plant resistance** been used to improve **pest management**?

- 4) Develop a search statement by combining keywords or concepts from the research question. For example, "**host plant resistance**" and "**pest management**" were identified as keywords in the question above. By connecting one or more terms with the Boolean operator "**and**", the researcher will retrieve only those articles that discuss *both* concepts, thus improving the relevancy of the search.

Enter in search field: **host plant resistance and pest management**

- 5) Develop alternate search statements to improve the search results. Authors may use various terms to describe the same concept.

For example, **pest control** is often used in the same context as **pest management**.

By identifying and connecting alternate terms, researchers may expand the search results. As indicated below, consider brainstorming and listing synonyms or word variations to identify alternate keywords.

<b>Concept 1</b>		<b>Concept 2</b>
host plant resistance	AND	pest management
genetic engineering	AND	disease control
crop breeding	AND	weed control
insect resistance	AND	pest control

- 6) Evaluate information for objectivity and reliability.
- 7) Cite the information borrowed from other authors or informational sources. Careful documentation will ensure that credit is given with no intention to plagiarize or claim ownership of information belonging to other researchers. For explanations and examples, visit the [Duke University Library's Citation page](#).

Questions?

Email: [librarian@vernoncollege.edu](mailto:librarian@vernoncollege.edu)

Chat: "Ask the Librarian" link on the Library homepage.

Phone: 940-552-6291 ext: 2222