

Iowa State University Library
Collection Development Policy Statement
AGRONOMY

I. General Purpose

The agronomy library collection provides information access and material support for the curriculum, teaching, and ongoing research of the students and faculty in the Department of Agronomy. This support includes the broad programs surrounding crop science, soil science, production agriculture, agricultural meteorology, and the environment. Additionally, the collection also supports the interdepartmental agriculture-related programs and the university extension service.

II. History

“Agronomy has been a part of the Iowa scene since the prairie soils were first broken. In 1858 the Iowa General Assembly and Governor Lowe authorized the establishment of the Iowa Agricultural College and Model Farm. In 1862, President Lincoln signed the Morrill Act which established the Land-Grant College System. Iowa was the first state to accept the terms of the Morrill Act, making Iowa State University the first chartered Land-Grant Institution in the nation.”¹

Although all the elements of the present-day Department of Agronomy, including teaching, extension, and research, were present by 1871, the department was formally created in 1902 and celebrated its centennial in 2002. The first M.S. degree in soils was awarded in 1890, with the first Ph.D. degree conferred in 1917. Today, the department offers five undergraduate majors and confers the B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees.

In 1906 the Extension Service was established with the passing of the Iowa Extension Act. A decade later, the Smith-Lever Act was passed, establishing a national Cooperative Extension Service.

Today, faculty and staff of the Department of Agronomy are involved in or offer support to many centers and institutes at the Iowa State University. These include the Iowa Crop Improvement Association, the Leopold Center, the National Soil Tilth Laboratory, the Plant Transformation Facility, the Plant Sciences Institute, the North Central Regional Plant Introduction Station, the Seed Science Center, the Crop Adviser Institute, the Raymond F. Baker Center for Plant Breeding, and the Agricultural Systems Initiative

III. Iowa State University Program

The undergraduate curriculum of the Department of Agronomy covers crop science, soil science, agricultural meteorology, and environmental science subject areas. The undergraduate Agronomy degree program has five areas of emphasis: Agroecology, Management and Business, Plant Breeding and Biotechnology, Research and Development, and Soil and Environmental Science.

¹ Agronomy Department, History—Overview
<http://www.agron.iastate.edu/department/history/overview.aspx>

The Department of Agronomy offers M.S. and Ph.D. degree programs in Agricultural Meteorology, Crop Production and Physiology (CP&P), Plant Breeding, Soil Science, and a distance-learning M.S. in Agronomy. The soil science program offer six areas of specialization: soil chemistry, soil fertility, soil management, soil microbiology and biochemistry, soil morphology and genesis, and soil physics.

The Department of Agronomy cooperates with other departments to offer interdepartmental program in professional agriculture. These interdepartmental majors include Ecology and Evolutionary Biology; Genetics; Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology (MCDB); Plant Physiology; Sustainable Agriculture; and Environmental Science (Iowa State Course Catalog, 2005–2007 courses and programs).

IV. Subject Boundaries

Materials supporting the program in water resources, the environment, genetics, biotechnology, molecular biology, and all aspects of international agriculture are procured. The S-SB classification location supports the Agronomy programs; however, material located elsewhere (e.g., other plant sciences materials, water resources, international agriculture development, etc.) can support Agronomy as well. The serial collection and networked information access through agriculture-related databases is important to agronomists. Also, a portion of this collection serves other components of agriculture handled by other subject specialists, such as specialists in Agricultural Education-History-Economics, Agricultural Engineering, Animal Science, Entomology, and Plant Pathology.

Iowa State has a yes/no Federal depository plan. Material is selected to support the curriculum and ongoing research. We have a State of Iowa depository plan, and we selectively procure materials from other states. UN publications, especially from the Food and Agriculture Organization, support the needs of Agronomy as well.

V. General Collection Guidelines

A. Linguistic: Most of the material selected is in English; however, selections from other languages are not excluded. Worldwide gifts and exchanges are received, supporting the program, visiting scholars, and our international students.

B. Geographical Areas: Iowa and the United States are the natural scope of coverage; however, Iowa State University's land-grant mission and ranking extends its International Agriculture programs worldwide.

C. Types of Materials Collected: Materials selected include serials (including full-text e-journals), monographs, conference proceedings, government publications in all forms (including technical reports, CDs, etc.), traditional reference sources (e.g., handbooks, encyclopedias, and indexes), electronic databases, and Web resources significant to the program. Some textbooks are procured selectively.

D. Formats of Materials Collected: The library generally selects materials supportive of the program in all the traditional forms. As mentioned above, more emphasis is now placed upon electronically networked resources (see Section V.C).

VI. Specific Collection Guidelines

Within the S-SB part of the library collection, support is also included for other agricultural subject areas (see Section IV).

VII. Detailed Subject Areas

The ISU library has an outstanding agriculture collection, supporting all programs in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Department teaching, research, and extension emphasis on the following subject areas: major agronomic crops, forage crops, alternative crops, biotechnology, biorenewables, crop breeding and genetics, crop management, crop production and physiology, crop/weather patterns, meteorology, precision agriculture, soils and soil fertility and management, sustainable agriculture, water quality and the environment, and international agriculture.

VIII. Other Resources Available

The ISU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, with its excellent network, has access to worldwide literature and collections through the following groups: the land-grant universities in the Midwest and throughout the nation; the National Agricultural Library, Washington DC; the Linda Hall Library on the campus of the University of Missouri–Kansas City; and agriculture-based university libraries around the world, including information available via OCLC's WorldCat.

IX. Cross-references to other collections

Primary overlapping subject areas include Botany, Genetics, Horticulture, Molecular Biology, Plant Pathology, and Sustainable Agriculture. Secondary areas of subject overlap include Entomology, Agricultural Education, Agricultural Engineering, and Agricultural Economics.

X. LC Class(es)

Primary: S, SB, QH, QK
Secondary: (See Sect. IX)

XI. Subject Specialist's Name

Pali U. Kuruppu

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