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INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFORMATION  
SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF THE USERS  
OF LIBRARIES  
PARTICIPATING IN THE  
AGRINET

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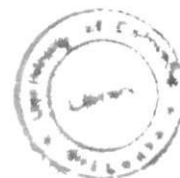
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## ABSTRACT

A survey was carried out to ascertain information needs and information seeking behaviour of the users of libraries participating in the AGRINET. A mailed questionnaire with structured and open-ended questions was used as the research instrument.

The results revealed that the agricultural scientists in Sri Lanka were actively engaged in research work. Teaching/training, management/administration, and extension were the other main functions that they performed. Their primary areas of research interests were centered around their fields of subject specialization. Plant protection, plant breeding and plant sciences were their main subject specialization.

The main purposes of seeking information by agricultural scientists were to support research work in progress and to keep pace with the latest developments in their fields of interests. About 32.3% of the agricultural scientists did their literature searches by themselves, while others obtained the assistance of secretaries, research assistants, and librarians.

The main current awareness and search techniques used to learn about new publications were literature searching, SDI service, library indexes and acquisition lists of the libraries. Due to lack of facilities to access Internet it was considered as the least important current awareness service.

Although more than 80.9% of respondents did not maintain their own card index files, 44.8% had maintained personal reprint files.

The agricultural scientists in Sri Lanka heavily depend on formal sources compared to informal sources. The formal sources such as; periodicals/journals, abstracting and indexing journals and books are still popular among agricultural scientists as sources of information in all three approaches; to keep up with current developments, for specific search and for comprehensive search.

The findings revealed that the majority of scientists (95.2%) use their own library facilities while 92.3% use external libraries too. Selective dissemination of information service (SDI service) and the inter library loan service of the libraries were considered as the most important library services.