



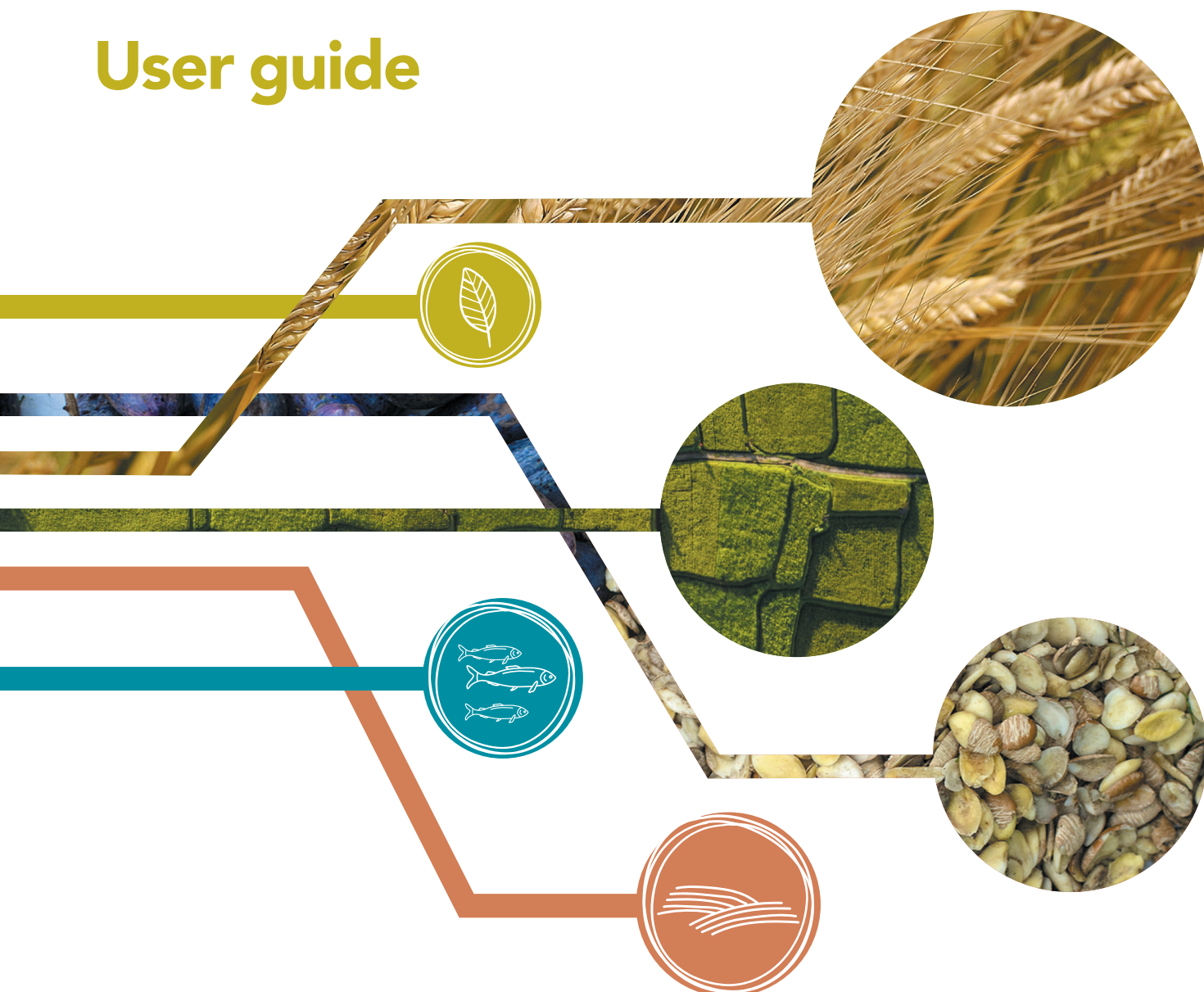
Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

# AGRIS

The International System  
for Agricultural Science  
and Technology

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## User guide



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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

**AGRIS:** International System for Agricultural Science and Technology

**AP:** Application Profile

**FAO:** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

**ISBN:** International Standard Book Number

**ISSN:** International Standard Serial Number

**ODS:** Open Data Set

**RDF:** Resource Description Framework

**RIS:** Research Information Systems

**URL:** Uniform Resource Locator

**XML:** Extensible Markup Language



# INTRODUCTION

Research organizations, higher education institutions and policymakers require access to relevant and timely scientific information to generate knowledge, strengthen research capacity and support informed decision-making in the food and agriculture domains. To help provide access to scientific information, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) enables knowledge transfer through the use of online platforms such as AGRIS, the International System for Agricultural Science and Technology.

AGRIS is one of the most comprehensive databases for food and agricultural scientific literature worldwide. Accessible through a user-friendly search interface, millions of bibliographic records in more than 90 languages are available for free to global users. AGRIS is also an international network of data providers, including publishers, governments and research organizations, that volunteers information (metadata) about food and agricultural science publications. These records are provided in multilingual formats and frequently include full text links to connect users to scientific literature worldwide.

Grey literature, journal articles and technical reports may not be sufficiently utilized, or could even be lost, if technologies are not employed to ensure that such resources are commonly accessible, interoperable and reusable. By making bibliographical information of research literature and references to research data available in a large collection, AGRIS provides a global information commons for agricultural research. As all records are also indexed by Google Scholar, participation in AGRIS also increases the visibility of locally-contributed data beyond peer-reviewed dissemination of knowledge.

The AGROVOC multilingual thesaurus is one of the main pillars in building the information commons for food and agriculture. But the power of a globally-distributed participatory information system can only be fully realized if every contributor applies certain standards, including using accepted language and terminology. AGROVOC helps to provide a common vocabulary for food and agriculture worldwide and, currently, allows users to work with relevant agricultural concepts across 41 languages. Consequently, AGROVOC allows AGRIS to transcend technical, geographical, political and linguistic boundaries.

In recent years, AGRIS has evolved to become an acknowledged information resource worldwide by moving from paper to digital, and from a centralized model to a distributed network. This guide aims to provide information that will enable users to search the AGRIS database efficiently and easily.

# KEY MESSAGES



**AGRIS** provides free access to more than 13.5 million bibliographic records, including over 4000 datasets

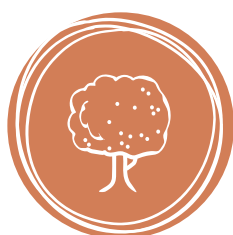
**AGRIS** records are available in more than 90 languages

**AGRIS** records are predominantly based on the AGROVOC multilingual thesaurus covering all FAO's interest areas

**“FAO has been a professional leader in global information management. In the last few years, AGRIS has amazingly revolutionized and strengthened its great mission of sharing and managing knowledge for agricultural innovation.”**

*Ruth Velia Gómez, Director of the National Center for Agricultural Information and Documentation (CENIDA) of the National Agrarian University of Nicaragua*





# 1.

## ABOUT AGRIS



## **AGRIS consists of two main elements – a network and a database.**

The AGRIS network refers to the contributing community of institutions from different countries. Since the 1970s, the network has grown to include institutions from 150 countries. AGRIS is also a searchable database with millions of structured bibliographical records on agricultural science and technology. All relevant information and resources about using and contributing to AGRIS is available through a web portal.

The purpose of AGRIS is to provide comprehensive scholarly research information in the agricultural domain by accepting content related to all FAO's areas of interest from data providers. AGRIS is used by anyone interested in such literature, including students, scientists, librarians, researchers, publishers and policymakers, among others.

### **AGRIS users**

- government officials
- graduate students
- lecturers
- librarians and other information professionals
- practitioners in the agriculture sector
- professional associations
- publishers
- researchers

### **AGRIS data providers**

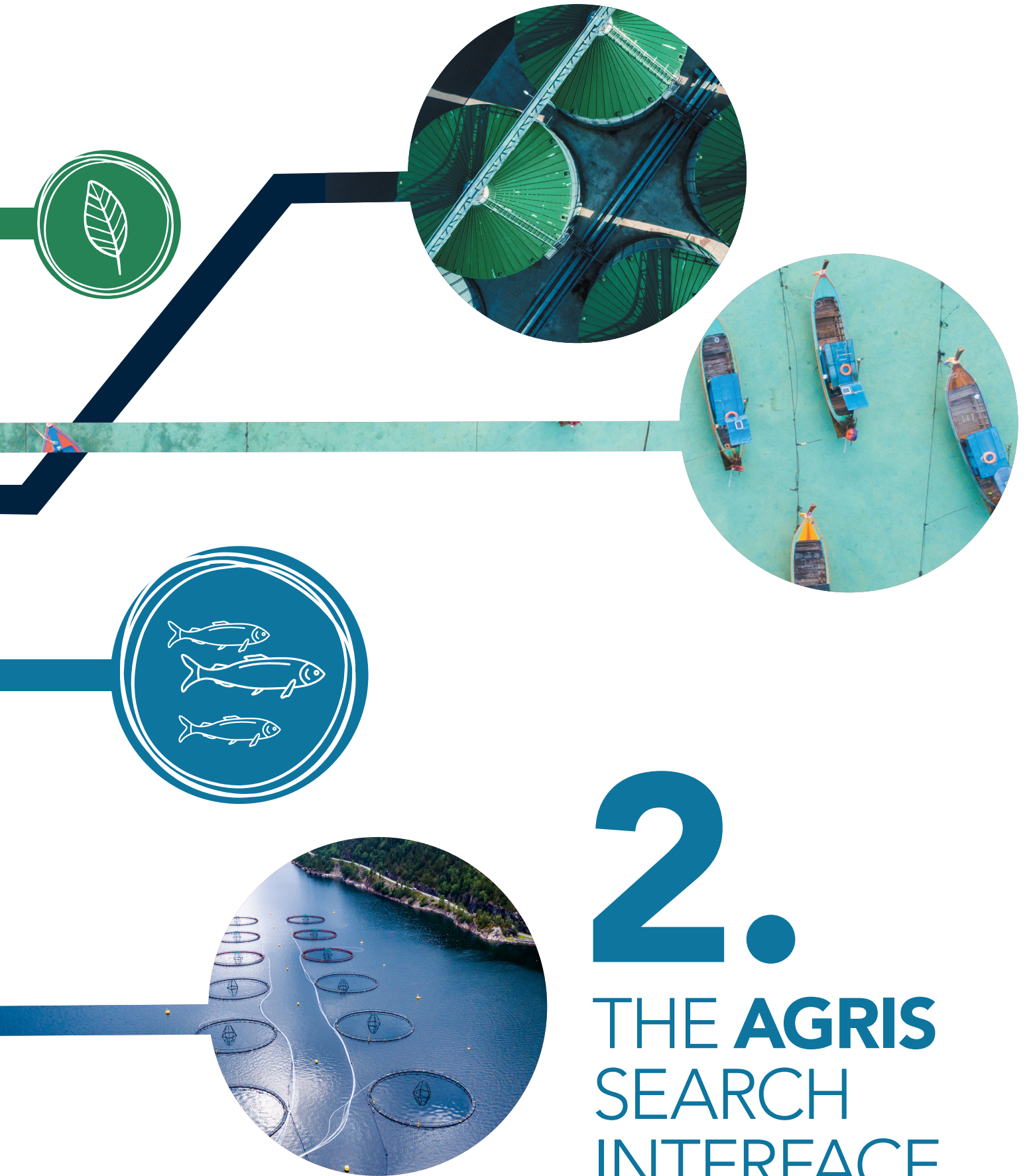
- academic institutions
- development programmes
- international and national organizations
- governmental bodies
- libraries
- publishers
- research centres

## **TYPES OF CONTENT**

- books and book chapters
- conference papers
- datasets
- journal articles
- monographs
- scientific and technical projects
- scientific and technical reports
- theses

## **SOME TOPICS COVERED BY AGRIS**

- agrifood economics
- agricultural innovation
- agroecology
- animal production and health
- aquaculture and fisheries
- digital agriculture
- climate change, biodiversity and environment
- food and nutrition
- food systems and food safety
- forestry
- inclusive rural transformation and gender equality
- land and water
- plant production and protection

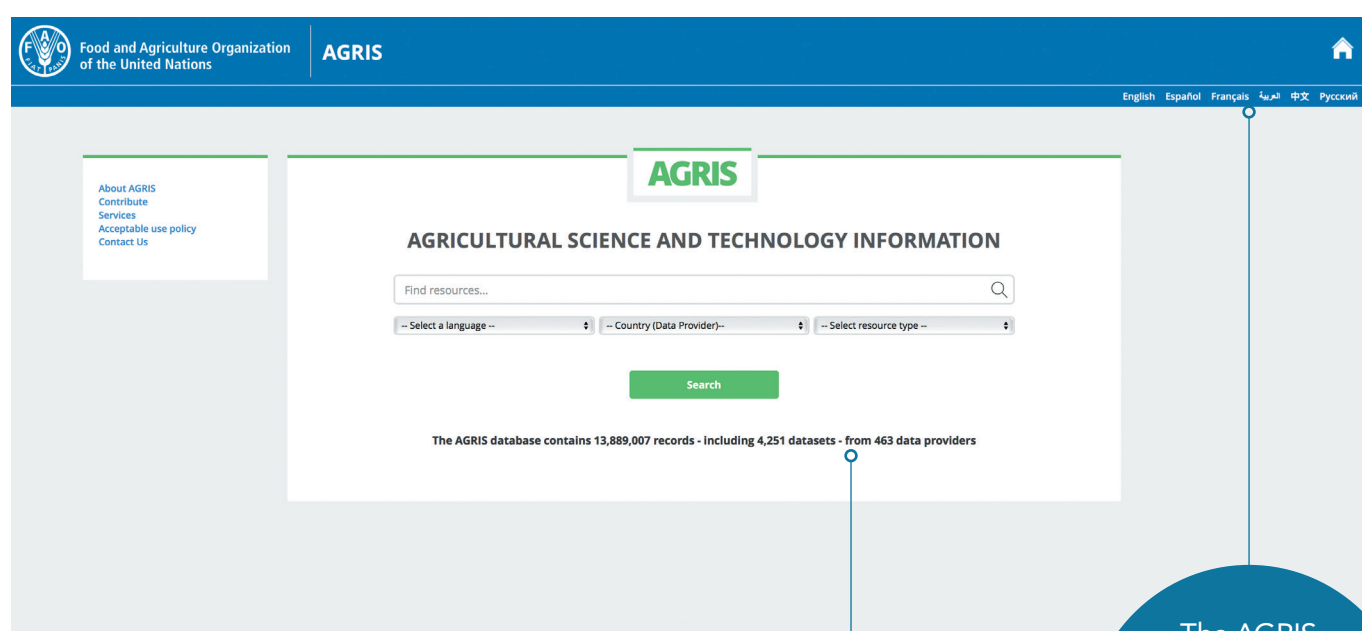


# 2.

## THE AGRIS SEARCH INTERFACE

Any user can access AGRIS at [agris.fao.org](http://agris.fao.org). AGRIS facilitates access to knowledge and information by indexing books, book chapters, datasets, journal articles, monographs, and grey literature including unpublished scientific and technical reports, theses, dissertations and conference papers. AGRIS indexes bibliographic references but does not store the full text articles. Resources submitted before 2010 may not have the link to the full text of the articles.

For records without a link to the full text, it is recommended that the user contact the data provider directly to ask for an electronic copy of the resource.



**Figure 1**  
AGRIS homepage

**AGRIS offers several options to search for information:**

- simple search – using keywords and phrases
- truncation and wildcards
- advanced – using Boolean operators
- filtering the search results
- browsing

In the central part of the AGRIS homepage, general information about the database is available: the number of records, the number of data sets, and the number of data providers.

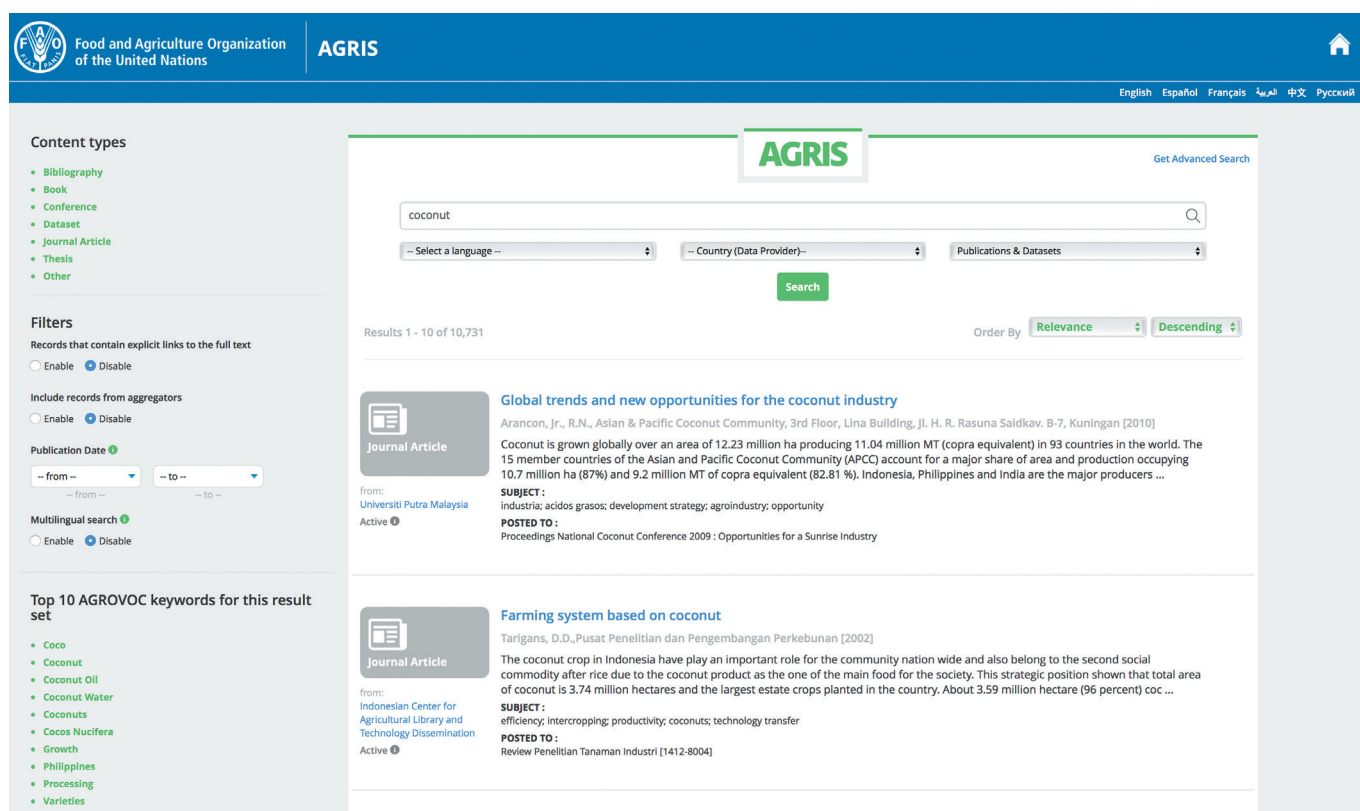
The AGRIS search interface can be displayed in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

# 2.1

## SIMPLE SEARCH

Searching in AGRIS is very simple. To start the search, the user can type any keywords related to a topic, author names, or title into the search box. As the user types in the search box, suggested terms, which are optional, will appear. The AGRIS search engine is activated by the user clicking the magnifying glass icon, the 'Search' button, or pressing 'Enter' on a keyboard. A page of results related to the search terms will be displayed.

The search results can be further filtered according to the following parameters: AGROVOC keywords, author, conference, collective authorship, ISBN, ISSN, journal title, publisher or title.

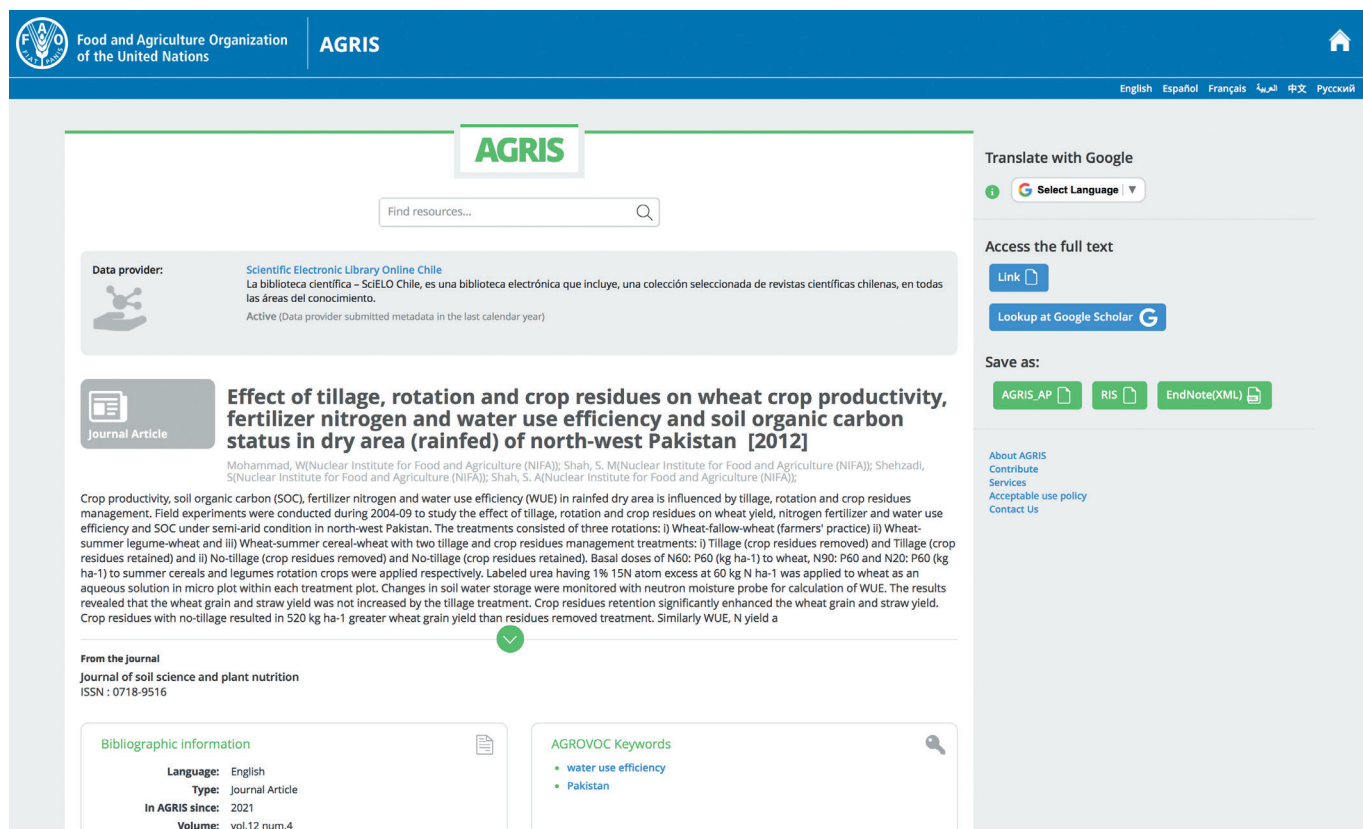


**Figure 2**  
An example of a search results page in AGRIS

The results page displays the initial search results in the main column of the page, as shown in Figure 2. The order of viewing results can be arranged by either descending or ascending relevance or submission year, using a drop-down menu option at the top right of the results list. 'Relevance' refers to the search query terms and filters used, while 'Submission year' refers to when information for a record was submitted to AGRIS by the data provider.

The ten results on each page are displayed with an icon that reflects the type of literature indexed, see Figure 2. Each result includes a preview with some information, such as title, author, publication year, a data provider, and/or subject terms. A result may also include an abstract and will state if the full text is available.





**Figure 3**  
An individual search result in AGRIS

Selecting an individual result displays the information from the preview with additional metadata. An individual result is shown in Figure 3 and is selected by clicking on the blue hyperlinked title from the results list.

There are several additional tools to help users filter and browse for the most suitable results. The user can apply these features at different steps of the search: from the homepage, list of results or the page for an individual record.

### MULTILINGUAL SEARCHING

AGRIS also enables multilingual searching. From the homepage, it is possible to ‘Select a language’ as an additional command to the main ‘Search’ box. In order to enhance ease of use, the number of languages available in the homepage drop-down menu is limited; however, the user can search using keywords in more than 90 languages. Searching by typing keywords in any language is the most precise method to discover what is available in a specific language; the results page and advanced search features also include a multilingual function. However, it should be noted that although many AGRIS results are indexed using English, the original work may be written in a different language.



Refining search strategies is recommended to find pertinent content in AGRIS, for example:

- 1. Defining a research topic**, such as *“The use of nutritional additives in bee feeding to increase the productivity of bee families”*.
- 2. Identifying search concepts from the research topic**. For example by keywords: *Apis mellifera*; *bee colony*; *nutritional additive*; *bee feeding*; or phrases: *“additives in bee feeding”*.
- 3. Performing a simple search**. Enter a keyword or phrase in the search bar and click the button at the far right side of the page. It is recommended to structure a search in a correct, clear and explicit way in line with the research topic.
- 4. Analysing the search results and making the necessary adjustments to the strategy used**. An effective search strategy should show only the results that match the identified search and contain the specific concepts a user is looking for.

In order to perform a more precise search, use AGROVOC keywords.

In order to search for an exact concept, type it in double quotes. For example, *“pigeonpea intercropping in maize based cropping systems”*.

The AGRIS system will provide relevant documents *only* if the search terms are present in the indexing of the document, i.e. only if they exist in the documents found. If initiating a search command without completed criteria, or if there are no resources in the database that contain the search concept, AGRIS returns a message, e.g. *“No results”*. The search interface allows the user to limit the search according to language and resource type.

## 2.2

### TRUNCATION AND WILDCARDS

To truncate a word, which allows searching for all derived words, the user should keep the root and remove the ending of the word, replacing it with a ‘wildcard’ symbol, e.g. an asterisk (\*).

**Example:** If the user wants to search for the terms *horticulture* and *horticultural*, the root would be ‘horticulture’, and the search term with truncation would be: *horticultur\**.

#### TRUNCATION

is useful when a user wants to find variant spellings of the same word.

**“My experience in Africa, working on AGRIS and related activities with colleagues in Ministries of Agriculture and related ministries, agriculture research institutes or organizations, and universities has shown me that AGRIS is a huge opportunity as an infrastructure or a network for providing access to agriculture science and technology data and information from developing countries to help generate knowledge, strengthen research capacity and support informed decision-making in the food and agriculture domains in the countries and regions.”**

*Justin Chisenga, Capacity Development Officer and Team Leader, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.*

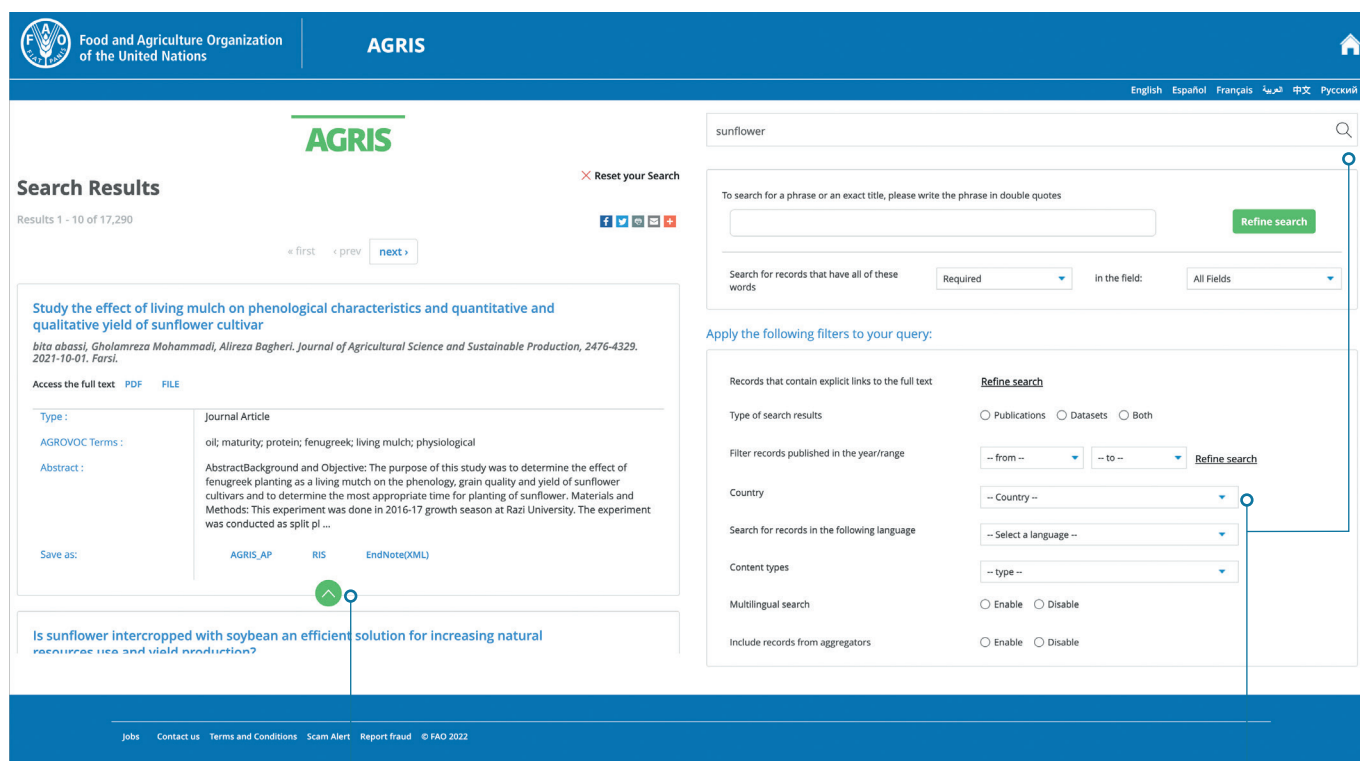
# 2.3

## ADVANCED SEARCH

The advanced search is available through the link 'Get advanced search' in the upper right corner of the results page. This page includes all of the previously listed AGRIS search features and options but it is organized differently to the main results page. For example, as shown in Figure 4, on the advanced search page, the results are now on the left, and the filters or further search options are on the right. Individual results can be previewed by clicking on the green arrow at the bottom of each result box.

Benefits of the advanced search include the ability to export records or link to the full text (if available) without having to view each record in a separate screen. Ten records are listed per page.

To restart the search process with new search terms and filters, or to return to the homepage of the database, a user can either click on the AGRIS title at the top of the screen or the house icon in the far right corner. To continue using advanced search, a user can select 'Reset your search'.



**Figure 4**  
An individual search result in AGRIS

Arrows open the records on the same screen as the search, providing options for saving the record in different formats.

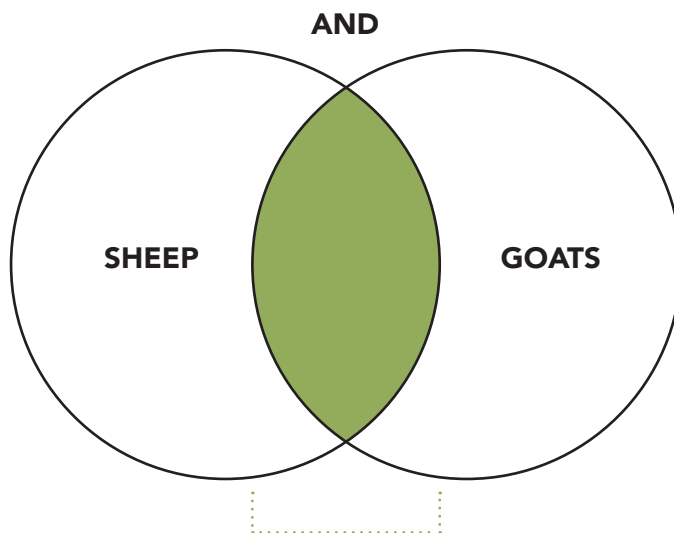
Additional search options, building on original term used.

# 2.4

## BOOLEAN OPERATORS

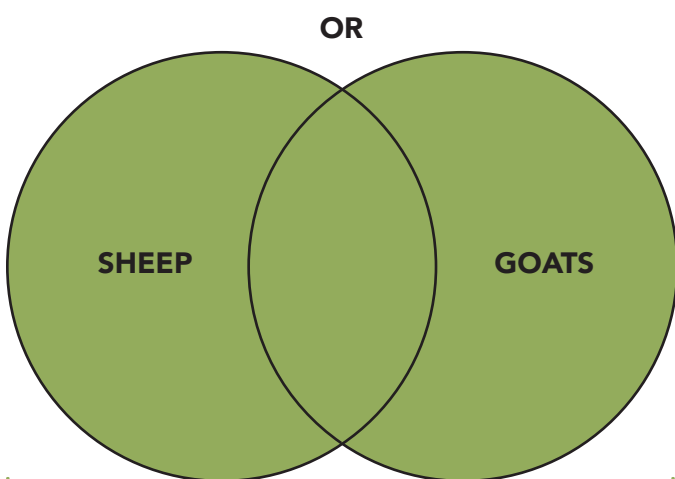
A Boolean search enables users to combine search terms and phrases using the words AND, OR, NOT (known as Boolean operators, after George Boole, the 19th century English mathematician) to limit, broaden, or define their search.

The AND operator is the logical operator for intersection, which allows AGRIS to link and combine two or more terms. This operator narrows the search to a smaller number of records than if the search is performed for each separate term. AGRIS selects the records that mention all terms and excludes those that contain separated terms, see Figure 5.



**Figure 5**  
Example of the Boolean operator AND

**Results with BOTH terms**

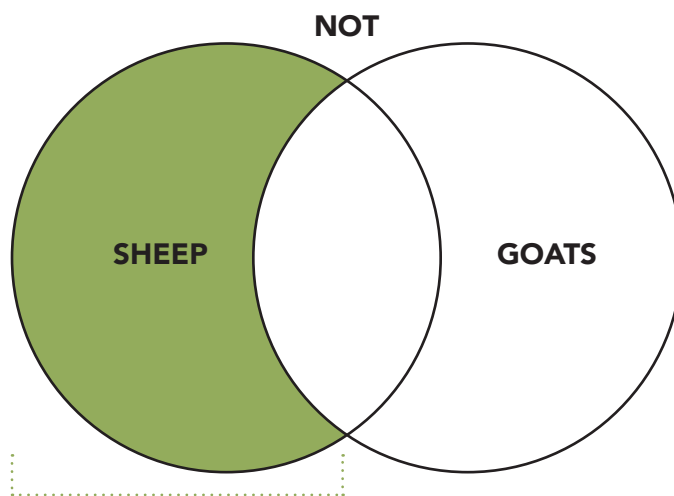


**Figure 6**  
Example of the Boolean operator OR

**Results with EITHER term (maximum results)**

The OR operator is the logical operator of union between two or more terms. The operator widens the search and is very useful in specifying synonyms for a topic. AGRIS returns the results that correspond to either the first or the second criterion. Unlike the AND operator, the two words should not both appear in the same record, see Figure 6.

The NOT operator is the logical operator that narrows down the search so AGRIS can return the results that correspond to the first criterion, excluding those results in which the second search term appears, see Figure 7.



**Results with ONE term (excluding results)**

**Figure 7**  
Example of the Boolean operator NOT



# 2.5

## AGRIS FILTERING OPTIONS

Depending on the topic that the user is interested in, it is possible to save time by using specific filters to perform the search. In order to narrow down the number of results, it is recommended to filter and customize the search results to find exactly what the user is looking for. There are several filtering options on the right side of the AGRIS advanced search page, see Figure 8.

### 2.5.1. Filtering by full text

AGRIS often provides access to the web addresses (URLs) of documents, especially those published after 2010. While searching, a user can use the option 'Filter records that contain explicit links to the full text' to retrieve only records that lead to the full text. About 6.6 million of the 13.9 million records in AGRIS provide access to the full text.

### 2.5.2. Filtering by type of search

It is possible to use the option 'Type of search results' when a user wants to select publications or datasets or both.

Apply the following filters to your query:

Records that contain explicit links to the full text	<u>Refine search</u>	
Type of search results	<input type="radio"/> Publications <input type="radio"/> Datasets <input checked="" type="radio"/> Both	
Filter records published in the year/range	<input type="text" value="-- from --"/>	<input type="text" value="-- to --"/> <input type="button" value="Refine search"/>
Country	<input type="text" value="-- Country --"/>	
Search for records in the following language	<input type="text" value="-- Select a language --"/>	
Content types	<input type="text" value="-- type --"/>	
Multilingual search	<input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable	
Include records from aggregators	<input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable	

**Figure 8**  
The filtering options on the AGRIS search results page

The screenshot shows the AGRIS search interface. The search term is 'grapes'. The search results are filtered by publication date from 2010 to 2020. Three results are displayed, each with a green checkmark icon indicating a full-text file is available. The filters on the right include 'publicationDate:[2010 TO 2020]'. The search results are:
 

- The effects of the quality of wine produced from narince and papaskarasi (Vitis vinifera L.) grape varieties of different yeast strains** by Özdemir, S., 2017; Namik Kemal Univ., Graduates School of Natural and Applied Science, Dep. of Food Engineering, tur.
- SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF INTRODUCED CLONES OF RED GRAPES VARIETIES** by Яланецкий, Анатолий Яковлевич, Государственное бюджетное учреждение Республики Крым «Национальный научно-исследовательский институт винограда и вина «Магарач», Yalanetskiy, Anatoliy, State Budget Organization of Republic of the Crimea National Science Research Institute for Vine and Wine Magarach,...
- Grape VOCs Response to Postharvest Short-Term Ozone Treatments** by Susana Río Segade, Mar Vilanova, Matteo Pallon, Simone Giacosa, Fabrizio Torchio, Luca Rolle. *Frontiers in Plant Science*, 1664-462X, 2018-12-01. English.

**Figure 9**  
Example of advanced search results filtered by publication date

The screenshot shows the AGRIS search interface. The search term is 'grapes'. The search results are filtered by language to Spanish. Three results are displayed, each with a green checkmark icon indicating a full-text file is available. The filters on the right include 'language:(Spanish)'. The search results are:
 

- Influence of cultural treatments on the tyrosinase activity in grapes from the Monastrell variety during ripening [Vitis vinifera L.; Alicante]** by Lizama, V., Sánchez, I., Garcia-Cases, L., Martí-Bruná, N., Saura, D., *Rivista di Viticoltura e di Enologia (Italy)*, 0370-7865, 2003. Spanish.
- Fatty acids and parameters of quality in the oil of wild grapes (Vitis spp.)** by Franco-Mora, O., Salomon-Castaño, J., Morales, A. A., Castañeda-Vildózola, A., Rubí-Arriaga, M., 2015-12-05; Universidad Nacional de Trujillo. Spanish.
- EFFECTO DEL MESOCLIMA EN LA MADURACIÓN DE UVA NEBBIOLO (Vitis vinifera) EN EL VALLE DE GUADALUPE, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MÉXICO** by Cabello-Pasini, Alejandro, Macías-Carranza, Víctor, Mejía-Trejo, Adán. *Agrociencia*, 1405-3195, 2017. Spanish.

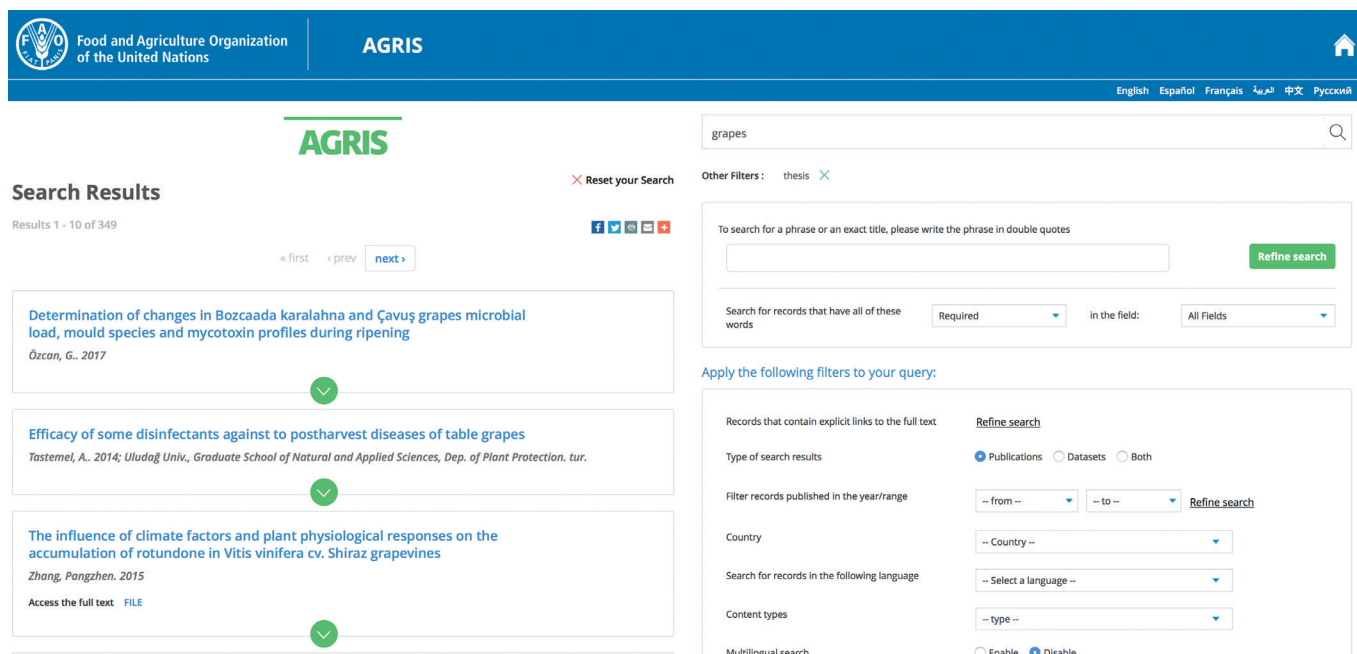
**Figure 10**  
Example of advanced search results filtered by language

### 2.5.3. Filtering by publication date

AGRIS includes publications dating back to 1965. In order to find publications on the topic of 'grapes' for instance, published over a period of time, it is recommended to use the 'Filter records published in the year/range'. For example, it is possible to select publications edited in the last ten years by narrowing the search with the help of the buttons shown in Figure 9.

### 2.5.4. Filtering by language

To search for publications in a specific language, a user should choose the desired language from the option 'Search for records in the following language', see Figure 10.



**Figure 11**  
Example of search results filtered by content type "thesis"

### 2.5.5. Filtering by content types

In order to refine search results, it is also recommended that a user chooses a specific content type as a filter, such as: books, theses, journal articles, conference materials, references, see Figure 11.

### 2.5.6. Filtering according to multilinguality

Multilingual search is an advanced filtering option that allows a user to query the AGRIS database in their native language, as well as get results in different languages, see Figure 12. This function is also available in the simple search on the left column before the top ten keywords.

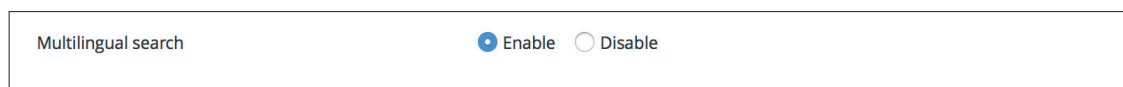
AGRIS uses the AGROVOC multilingual thesaurus to translate the user query into all available languages. For example, if a user inputs the keyword 'struguri' (Romanian for 'grapes'), they will only get records in Romanian.

If the user then activates the filtering option for multilingual search, the AGRIS system performs the query in the languages available in AGROVOC and presents the records for all possible translations of the keyword.

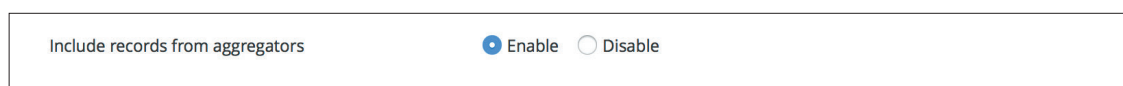
This filter feature works well when the search is based on keywords. Using AGROVOC, AGRIS is able to obtain the translation of each keyword in another language. However, it does not offer great results if the search is a sentence, a title, etc; therefore, a combination of keywords is the best option.

### 2.5.7. Filtering by other content aggregators

AGRIS also includes records from other content aggregators, e.g. AGRICOLA or Avano, see Figure 13. When performing the search for 'grapes', AGRIS gives 17 192 results. When enabling the filtering option to include records from aggregators, it is possible to obtain 34 329 results.



**Figure 12**  
The multilingual search option for filtering results from AGRIS



**Figure 13**  
The 'Include records from aggregators' option for filtering results from AGRIS

# 2.6

## A RESULT IN DETAIL

As shown in Figure 14, individual AGRIS results contain the title, author(s), publication date, an abstract, and information about the data provider. Above the title, the name of the data provider is linked to a website (if available). Methods of sharing AGRIS search results are available using either the 'Add This+' options for social media or email. Search results can be saved in AGRIS AP, RIS, or EndNote XML formats. These formats allow bibliographic reference management software to exchange data. Applications, such as Zotero, Citavi, Mendeley and EndNote, can export and import citations in these formats.

Note: The bibliographic information will state which language the AGRIS record is indexed with and not the language in which the original referenced work is written.

A result also displays AGROVOC keywords at the bottom of the screen. Each AGROVOC keyword is hyperlinked to a new search result list, with additional records pertinent to the keyword.

The AGRIS interface provides the 'Translate with Google' option to translate the information from the selected record. Note: as this translation tool is provided by Google, FAO is not responsible for the accuracy and precision of the translations.

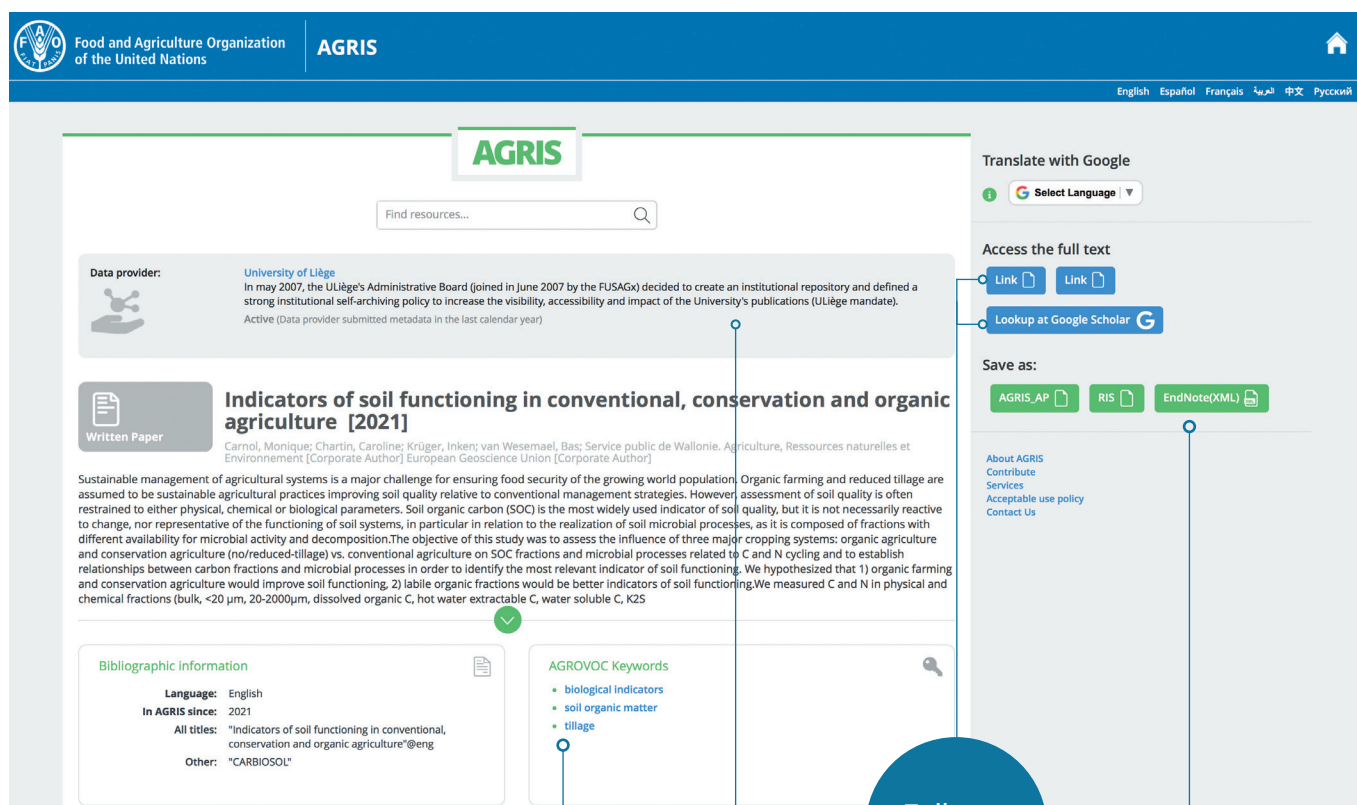
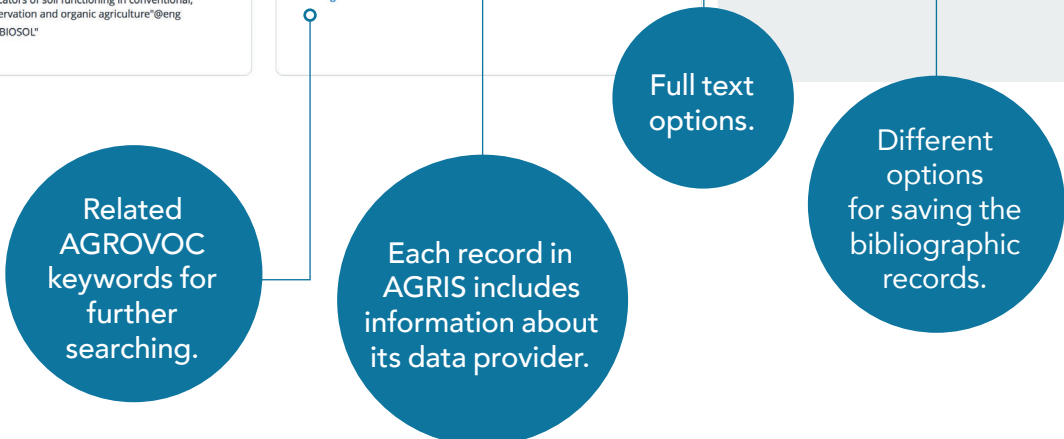
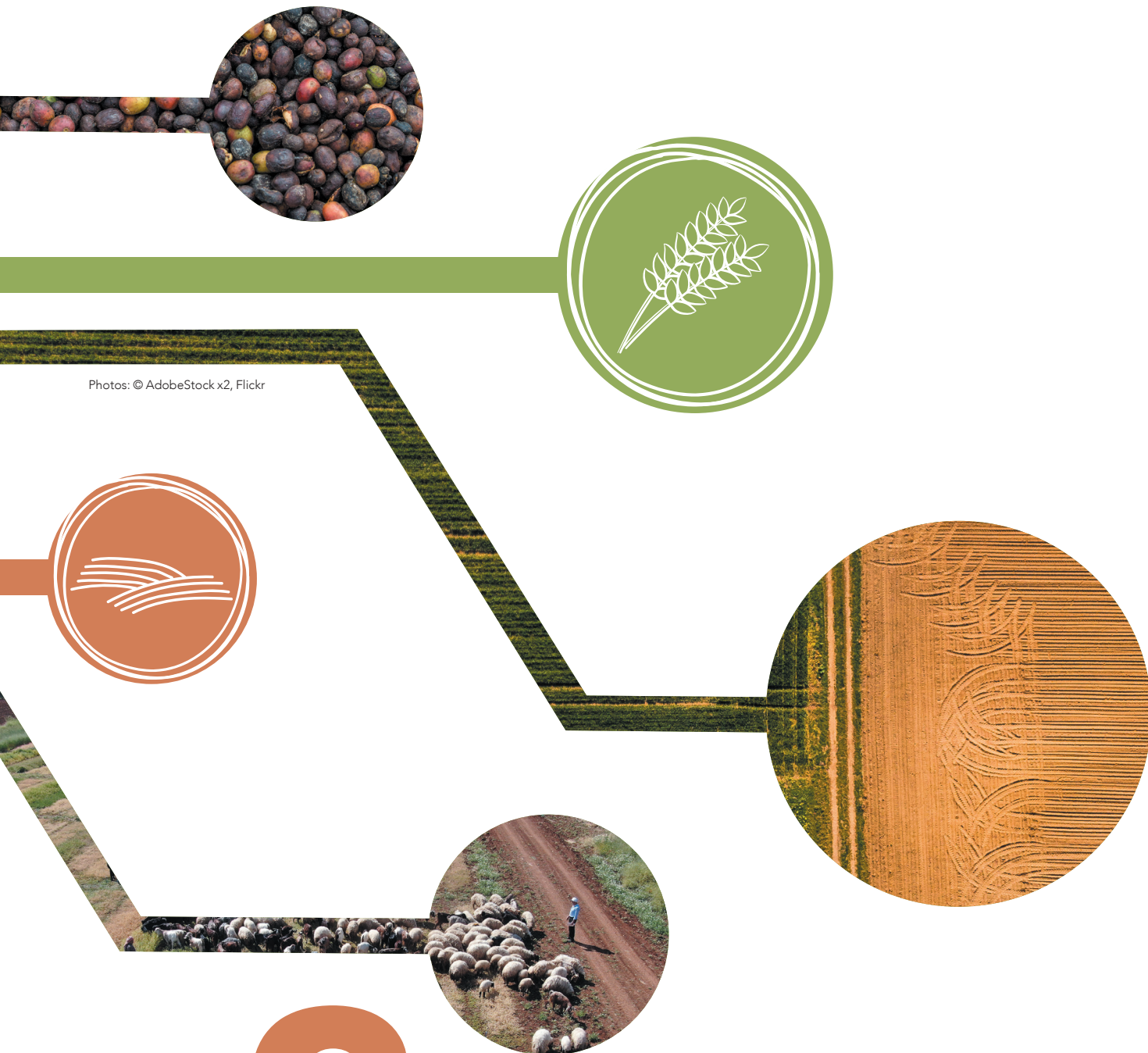


Figure 14  
AGRIS bibliographic record annotated







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# 3.

## REUSING **AGRIS** DATA IN OTHER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

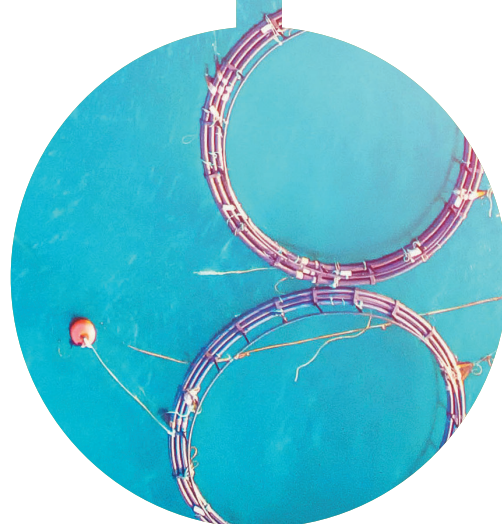
An additional feature of AGRIS is the option to download the AGRIS Open Data Set (ODS), which is a collection of AGRIS records that can be freely used, reused and redistributed by anyone. The AGRIS ODS has been set up thanks to the many AGRIS data providers who have agreed to include their metadata in downloadable formats for libraries to integrate into their own information systems.

Why should a user consider downloading the AGRIS ODS? The AGRIS ODS increases data visibility and also offers the opportunity to enrich data. Library users and information seekers increasingly expect a one step process, either with a search engine, such as Google, or a library discovery tool combining its catalog with other resources. In response to this evolving world of information, the AGRIS ODS brings bibliographic references directly to library systems. The available formats can be used in many different software applications. The advantage of open data, specifically the AGRIS ODS, is the important opportunity to increase analysis of agricultural performance and, consequently, help inform agricultural investment, innovation and policy to drive changes toward increasing sustainability in the agriculture sector.

The AGRIS ODS comes under an open license, CC-BY IGO 3.0. The AGRIS ODS is downloadable as a zip file at [https://agris.fao.org/agris\\_ods](https://agris.fao.org/agris_ods). It is available in different formats, including AGRIS AP and RDF formats. Once downloaded, the files can be filtered to best serve organizations and their information systems.

# 4.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON **AGRIS**



**Celli, F., Malapela, T., Wegner, K., Subirats-Coll, I., Kokoliou, E. & Keizer, J.** 2015. AGRIS: providing access to agricultural research data exploiting open data on the web. *F1000Research*, 4:110. <http://eprints.rclis.org/28134>

**FAO.** 2020. AGRIS Webinar: What is AGRIS Today [video]. Rome, Italy. <https://www.fao.org/agris/webinars/agris-webinar-what-agris-today>

**FAO.** 2021. Introduction to AGRIS – AGRIS Virtual Annual Conference 2021 Session 1 [video]. Rome, Italy. <https://www.fao.org/agris/webinars/introduction-agris-agris-virtual-annual-conference-2021-session-1>

**Malapela, T., Celli, F., Subirats-Coll, I. & Keizer, J.** 2014. The role of AGRIS in providing global agricultural information to boost productivity and food security. 16-22 August 2014. Lyon. IFLA WLIC 2014 - Libraries, Citizens, Societies: Confluence for knowledge. <http://eprints.rclis.org/28131>

# CONTACT

Partnerships and UN Collaboration Division

[AGRIS@fao.org](mailto:AGRIS@fao.org)

[www.fao.org/agris](http://www.fao.org/agris)

[agris.fao.org](http://agris.fao.org)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Rome, Italy