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Human Nutrition and Food (Joint Policy with NAL and NLM) (LC Section revised Nov. 2008)

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I. Introduction

The National Agricultural Library (NAL), the National Library of Medicine (NLM) and the Library of Congress (LC) acquire publications devoted to human nutrition and food, and provide document and information services for these materials. The three libraries have reviewed their respective collection development policies in human nutrition and food and have prepared this joint statement in order to clarify the collecting emphasis of each library and, where possible, to minimize duplication of effort. Users should consult the complete collection development policies of the libraries for additional information.

II. General Principles

Nutrition is defined as the "science of food, the nutrients and other substances therein, their action, interaction and balance in relation to health and disease, and the processes by which the organism ingests, absorbs, transports, utilizes and excretes food substances."¹ This joint statement deals specifically with human nutrition. Animal nutrition is covered in the joint statement "Veterinary Science and Related Subjects."

Together NAL, NLM, and LC attempt to collect, retain, and preserve all significant information on human nutrition and food; however, aspects of the subject areas are collected and treated differently at each institution depending upon its mission and the needs of its users.

III. NAL

NAL collects information on human nutrition and food to support United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs. These programs encompass areas as diverse as human nutritional needs, food production, safety and inspection, distribution, economics, and consumer education. NAL comprehensively collects materials on normal nutrition, that is, caloric and nutrient requirements throughout the life-cycle and for specific populations. It also maintains a strong research collection on physiology and biochemistry of nutrition. Although NAL's coverage of clinical nutrition is selective, dietary supplements are covered comprehensively. Works on nutrition monitoring and surveys and food assistance programs receive special emphasis. Through its Food and Nutrition Information Center, NAL serves USDA personnel working with nutrition education and food assistance programs throughout the United States. NAL collects instructional materials suitable for use by nutrition educators, health professionals and specific populations with special nutritional needs, although selected materials for the general public are included. Food habits and customs are important to USDA because of their influence on the nutritional status of the US population and their usefulness in planning nutrition education programs.

Because of USDA's responsibility for food safety and inspection, NAL comprehensively collects works about foodborne illness, food toxicology, and food inspection. In addition, in support of USDA's close relationship and regulatory role with the food industry, NAL collects information on food industry and technology including food irradiation and biotechnology. NAL collects information relevant to all aspects of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) for food producers and handlers. NAL's comprehensive collection of works on food service management for schools supports USDA's school meal program throughout the United States. NAL collects selected material on home food preparation and handling. Because of USDA's leadership in food programs around the world, NAL collects materials related to the food supply, food consumption, and world hunger (food security) at the comprehensive level.

IV. NLM

Since NLM's coverage of nutrition is shaped by its responsibility to serve the health professional, it comprehensively collects research and clinical literature in every aspect of human nutrition including normal nutrition, i.e., caloric and nutrient requirements throughout the life cycle and for specific populations, and clinical nutrition, i.e., nutrition intervention aimed at the treatment or prevention of disease or illness. Topics of special collecting emphasis include diet therapy, dietary supplements, enteral and parenteral nutrition support, and nutritional epidemiology. Because of the library's emphasis on biomedical research, NLM is particularly interested in works dealing with the physiology and biochemistry of nutrition. NLM also collects titles on nutrition policy as a public health issue, and nutrition as a health care profession.

The library collects works on nutrition education written primarily for those engaged in or preparing for careers in nutrition research, clinical nutrition, or nutrition in a health care setting. A limited number of instructional works written for general audiences or patients may be selected for their historical value, to chronicle public health outreach efforts, or to represent materials available to health providers for direct patient care. Such materials are collected very selectively with the emphasis on authoritative materials likely to be widely used in U.S. health care.

NLM collects more narrowly in food-related subject areas. The library's primary interests are food

composition, foodborne illness and food toxicology. NLM also collects works dealing with the public health aspects of food labeling and food inspection, but does not collect works on the management or techniques of dairy, meat, fish or other food inspection programs. NLM collects works on dietary habits and customs when the content is directly related to biomedicine or health care; purely sociocultural works on food customs generally are not collected. NLM collects works on food service management in health care facilities, but not those on general food service management. NLM does not collect works on the food industry, food technology, food supply (including food consumption and food economics), or home food preparation and handling.

V. LC

The Library of Congress collects information on human nutrition and food to support its mission and responsibility to serve the Congress as well as the United States Government as a whole, the scholarly and scientific communities, and the general public. The Library acquires materials on human nutrition and food primarily at the research level, (Level 4), regardless of format, with greater concentration in some specific areas, such as cookery and chemical technology. In general, the Library acquires, at research (Level 4) or comprehensive (Level 5) levels, materials on normal nutrition and food composition, the physiology and biochemistry of nutrition, nutrition policy, food assistance programs, nutrition monitoring, food habits and customs, food history, food security, food toxicology, food additives, food chemistry, food analysis, food manufacture and processing, food preservation, cookery and gastronomy, and food supply and safety. The Library places less emphasis on collecting materials on nutrition education, aspects of clinical nutrition such as diet therapy and nutrition support, food service management, and the distribution and marketing of food

Materials acquired include monographs, serials, reference works, textbooks, microform, audio-visual materials, manuscripts, pamphlets and ephemera. Materials may be in any format, including print or electronic format, and include electronic databases and works published only in digital format, electronic serials, databases, and materials published on the Web. Doctoral dissertations in the areas of nutrition and food technology, generally in digital format and/or microform, are collected comprehensively by the Library. Relevant electronic resources, including e-journals, subscription databases, and other online resources are acquired. The collections rely strongly on English-language copyright deposits, received according to the Copyright Best Edition Statement.

The Library's collection of cookbooks and cookery is an invaluable source for researchers. In addition to over 35,000 titles in the General Collections, two important cookery collections are held in the Rare Book and Special Collections Division. The Elizabeth Robbins Pennell Cookbook Collection, with 433 volumes, is strongest in French and Italian cookbooks from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. The Katherine Golden Bitting Collection consists of over 4,000 volumes on gastronomy, dating from the fifteenth through the twentieth centuries. Also important are the Library's digitized collections in the American Memory Collections. Materials in these collections that are often relevant include diaries, early works on travel, ephemera such as broadsides, cookery books, and personal narratives. Collections of note include the Nicole Di Bona Peterson Collection of Advertising Cookbooks, in the *Emergence of Advertising in America Collection*, produced in cooperation with Duke University. The Library of Congress also maintains a related policy statement on *Cookery, Nutrition and Food Technology*.

VI. Collecting Levels

NAL and LC employ collecting level definitions developed by the Research Libraries Group (RLG) and adopted by the Association of Research Libraries. The definitions follow:

Comprehensive Level: Collections in a specifically defined field of knowledge that strive to be exhaustive as far as is reasonably possible (i.e., "special collections") in all applicable languages include:

- * Exhaustive collections of published materials
- * Very extensive manuscript collections
- * Very extensive collections in all other pertinent formats

Research Level: Collections that contain the major published source materials required for doctoral study and independent research include:

- * A very extensive collection of general and specialized monographs and reference works
- * A very extensive collection of general and specialized periodicals
- * Extensive collections of appropriate materials in language other than the primary language of the country and collection
- * Extensive collections of the works of both well-known and lesser-known authors
- * Defined access to a very extensive collection of owned or remotely accessed electronic resources, including bibliographic tools, texts, data sets, journals, etc.

Study or Instructional Support Level: Collections that provide information about a subject in a systematic way, but at a level of less than research intensity and support the needs of general library users through college and beginning graduate instruction include:

- * An extensive collection of general monographs and reference works and selected specialized monographs and reference works
- * An extensive collection of general periodicals and a representative collection of specialized periodicals
- * Limited collections of appropriate materials in languages other than the primary language of the collection and the country, for example, materials to aid in learning a language for non-native speakers or literature in the original language, such as German poetry in German or Spanish history in Spanish
- * Extensive collections of the works of well-known authors and selections from the works of lesser-known authors
- * Defined access to a broad collection of owned or remotely-accessed electronic resources, including bibliographic tools, texts, data sets, journals, etc.

Basic Information Level: Collections that introduce and define a subject, indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere, and support the needs of general library users through the first two years of college instruction include:

- * A limited collection of general monographs and reference tools
- * A limited collection of representative general periodicals

* Defined access to a limited collection of owned or remotely-accessed electronic bibliographic tools, texts, data sets, journals, etc.

Minimal Information Level: Collections that support minimal inquiries about this subject and include a very limited collection of general resources, including monographs and reference works. Periodicals directly dealing with this topic and in-depth electronic information resources are not collected.

Out of Scope: The library does not intentionally collect materials in any format for this subject. In its most recent statement of collecting policies (Collection Development Manual of the National Library of Medicine, Fourth Edition, 2004), NLM focused its collecting efforts on the biomedical literature. Instead of following the levels defined by RLG, NLM stated that it would attempt to collect comprehensively biomedical aspects of any subject.

NLM's concept of comprehensive collecting is compatible with the Comprehensive level as defined by the RLG, but the scope of the NLM collection, encompassing as it does all of biomedicine, is significantly broader than is generally understood for the "special collection" referred to in the RLG definition. NLM recognizes that while it is possible to assemble a collection which addresses all topics in biomedicine, it is impossible even for a national library to gather a complete, worldwide collection of all biomedical materials in all formats.

The following table summarizes LC, NAL, and NLM's collecting levels. For more specific information on any limitations based on intended audience, aspects of subjects, etc., refer to the text of the accompanying statement.

Human Nutrition and Food Topics at NAL, NLM, and LC

Subject	NAL Collecting Level	NLM Collecting Level	LC Collecting Level
Physiology of Nutrition	Research	Comprehensive	Research
Biochemistry of Nutrition	Research	Comprehensive	Research
Normal Nutrition	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Research
Clinical Nutrition			
--Dietary Supplements	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Research
--Diet Therapy	Study	Comprehensive	Study
--Epidemiology	Basic	Comprehensive	Study
--Nutrition Support	Basic	Comprehensive	Study

Nutrition Education	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Study
Nutrition as a Profession	Basic	Comprehensive	Study
Food Security	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Research
Nutrition Policy	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Research
Food Assistance Programs	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Research
Nutrition Monitoring and Surveys	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Research
Food habits and Customs			
--General	Research	Out of Scope	Comprehensive
--Health Related	Research	Comprehensive	Research
Food Industry and Technology			
--Processing and Manufacture	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Research
--Preservation and Storage	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Study
--Distribution and Marketing	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Study
--Food Irradiation	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Study
--Biotechnology	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Research
Food Safety			
--Foodborne Illness	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Research
--Food Toxicology	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Research
Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP)	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Study
--Inspection	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Study
Food Supply	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Research
Food Composition	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Research

Food Science	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Research
Food Service Management			
--General, Commercial	Study	Out of Scope	Study
--Schools	Comprehensive	Out of Scope	Study
--Health Facilities	Basic	Comprehensive	Basic
Home Food Preparation and Handling	Basic	Out of Scope	Research

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References

1. Nutrition and Diet Therapy Reference Dictionary. Rosalinda T. Laguna and Virginia S. Claudio. New York, Chapman & Hall, 1995.

Joint collections policy statements of the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine and the National Agricultural Library are available at the following URLs:

National Agricultural Library http://www.nal.usda.gov/about/policy/jt_coll_dev_nutrition.shtml

National Library of Medicine <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/tsd/acquisitions/cdm/>

Library of Congress <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/hum.pdf>