

Economic Research Service: State Fact Sheets. Access: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/StateFacts/>.

Students researching agriculture or local population issues will find useful data in the State Fact Sheets from the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service (ERS). While the site doesn't approach the comprehensive and in-depth statistical data of the Census Bureau, it provides a summary of statistics on population, income, farm characteristics, farm financial indicators, and top commodities and exports at the national and state level.



Users can find data for the United States as a whole or choose a state from a clickable map. Population is shown as rural versus urban, with statistics presented in ten-year increments from 1980 to 2000, plus data from 2006. Income is divided by per capita income, earnings per job, and poverty rate, again comparing urban versus rural for the chosen state. Education-related statistics show urban and rural high school and college completion rates, and population statistics present the total number of jobs and the unemployment rate.

Data on farm characteristics are taken from the 1992, 1997 and 2002 Census of Agriculture, showing data on topics such as conservation practices, number of farms by size, and characteristics of principal farm operators. Farm financial indicators include data from 2004 and 2005, and include elements such as annual crop output, annual animal output, capital consumption, and net farm income.

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Top Commodities, Exports, and Counties includes the top five agriculture commodities, top five agriculture exports, and top five counties in agricultural sales, with data ranging from 2002 to 2006.

Users have the option to download each fact sheet in Excel. Links to other ERS pages for more in-depth information and statistics are provided. Also, links are provided from many of the fact sheets to more specific information, such as county-level population and farm employment and state export data. Contact information is available for each dataset, and a short FAQ is also provided. Overall, this user-friendly and easily navigable site offers an interesting set of data and ample links to additional information. *Britt Fagerheim, Utah State University, britt.fagerheim@usu.edu*

MedlinePlus. Access: <http://medlineplus.gov>.

MedlinePlus aims to be a one-stop shop for authoritative consumer health information. It is based largely on information from the U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health with approved content from other government agencies and health-related organizations. One of the criteria that must be met for this outside content to be included on the site is that the information must be appropriate to the audience level, well-organized and easy to use.

This free resource contains a variety of consumer health sources and information, including detailed information on 740 health topics, a medical encyclopedia and dictionary, prescription drug information, current health news, and links to clinical trials. It also provides lists of U.S. hospitals and physicians, and offers health information in Spanish as well as English.

In the footer of every screen there is a link to Quality Guidelines, which outlines the criteria used to evaluate sites for inclusion on MedlinePlus. The list is extensive

and includes points such as: The source of the content is established, respected and dependable. The organization publishes a list of advisory board members or consultants on the site. There is also an advertising policy: MedlinePlus requires a clear differentiation between content and advertising.

Medlineplus.gov is divided into three columns with a simple search box at the top of the screen. The left column contains links to resources such as health topics, drug information, an encyclopedia, directories of physicians, and a "Go Local" link that allows you to search for specific hospital services by state. The second column contains dynamic content – an RSS feed of current health news, featured Web sites and Web casts, and health quizzes. The third column provides links to interactive tutorials, clinical trials, NIH SeniorHealth, surgery videos, and a "What's New on MedlinePlus" section.



The results of a basic search using the search box on the homepage are organized into a left hand column, which indicates the number of results and where on MedlinePlus they were found, and an expanded list of Web links appears in the center of the screen. Tabs appear at the top of that page, which allow the user to navigate into an encyclopedia or other source to browse on their own.

Links to NLM content are listed first, with NIH links and other approved Web results rounding out the list. When they are available, links to NLM content also provide an overview of the topic, multimedia and visual resources, scholarly research, and a "Learn More" feature that offers links to related issues, coping mechanisms, nutrition, etc.

Medline Plus is recommended for providing medical information to the layperson, and can be helpful for librarians as well when trying to assist a client with any health-related reference question. *Allison Thompson, Mc-Master University, thomall@mcmaster.ca*

Poets.org. Access: <http://www.poets.org>.

Established by the Academy of American Poets, Poets.org is an essential site for any poetry lover's collection. Visitors will find poems, biographical information on poets, essays on writing, information on how to donate, as well as help finding poetry events.

While the homepage contains a wealth of information, the design and structure of the site makes it visually attractive and easy to navigate.

The site has several unique and user-friendly technical features that enhance the usability of the information. Visitors can quickly create a user name and password so they can maintain their own notebooks, an area where they can save favorite poems, poets, events, and more. Furthermore, people can contribute to the "Life/Lines" section of the Web site, which allows readers to share those poetic lines most important to them and to offer background into the reason for their importance.

The options for finding information, as well as the amount of information available, is what makes this site a treasure for poetry admirers. Directly from the homepage, users can perform a quick search by poem or poet. An advanced search option is also available for searching by title, poet's last name, first line, movement (such as Harlem Renaissance or Poets of Exile), and theme (such as childhood, anniversary, or birthday). In addition to the advanced search options, users can take advantage of the National Poetry Map to find a poet, event, or organization in their state.



The site offers a free e-newsletter with the latest poems, features, and bulletins deliverable either via e-mail or RSS feed. Beyond simply reading poetry, users can also listen to poets' readings and discussion of their

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Middle Tennessee State University, has been tenured and promoted to the rank of associate professor.

Rebecca Troy-Horton is now head of the government documents department at Frazar Memorial Library at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana.

Judit Hajnal Ward has been appointed director of the Center of Alcohol Studies Library at Rutgers University.

Tao Yang is the new East Asian librarian at Rutgers University Libraries.

years, providing leadership to staff members in all areas, enhancing development efforts, and planning for a new special collections library for the Columbia campus. His work at USC culminated a career of 41 years of service, primarily at the University of Kentucky.



Paul A. Willis

Retirements

Virginia Massey-Burzio, head of research services and collections at the Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries, retired July 1, after 15 years at the university and more than 41 years of service to the profession. Massey-Burzio began her career at the Boston Public Library and went on to serve at Dartmouth College, Brandeis University, and the University of Maryland-College Park. While at Brandeis, Massey-Burzio created what became known as the Brandeis Model, an in-depth type of reference service that best uses a librarian's professional expertise. It delivers the kind of service library patrons need and librarians are most qualified to deliver, but are unlikely to receive in the traditional reference service model. She won ALA's Isadore Gilbert Mudge Award in 1999 for distinguished contributions to reference librarianship. The hallmark of her career has been encouraging staff to create services that make using the library easy and convenient for users rather than focusing on what librarians think patrons ought to learn.

Kathleen Conley has retired as head of general reference and documents at Illinois State University after 36 years of service.

Paul A. Willis retired as dean of libraries at the University of South Carolina (USC) on June 30. Willis led the USC libraries for

Deaths

Virginia Phillips Whitney, 92, former university librarian at Rutgers University, has died in June. After earning her MLS degree at Rutgers University in 1962, she worked in the university's libraries until her retirement. She was appointed university librarian in 1971, becoming the first woman administrator of a major university library system in the United States. In that role oversaw a system with 19 libraries and 260 employees. One of her signature projects was the installation and integration of computers throughout the Rutgers University libraries. Virginia was an active member of the ALA and the Association for Research Libraries and also taught in the Rutgers Graduate School for Library Science. ♪

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work through iTunes using the Poetcast. For educators, the site provides a list of great poems to teach, tips for teaching poetry, a forum to discuss lesson plans, and actual units to teach, primarily aimed at grades nine through twelve.

Visitors can also browse The Poetry Store to purchase video or audio materials as well as books. The Academy of American Poets has created a rich site containing a wide variety of poetry-related information. *Debbi Renfrow, University of California-Riverside, debbir@ucr.edu ♪*