

The Microbial Germplasm Database

The Microbial Germplasm Database (MGD) is a significant new information resource for plant pathologists and other scientists. The MGD is not a microbiological supply house. In essence, it is a computer-based catalog of accessions in the care of research-scientist custodians who volunteered to comprise a database. This expandable database was established during 5 years of diligent, APS-endorsed effort by L. W. Moore and his research team at Oregon State University.

In the development of the MGD, 20 key individuals contributed "passport data" for accessions in their own microbial reference collections and, with Moore, enlisted other colleagues to do likewise. Individual subdiscipline data sets (e.g., viruses, bacteria, and fungi) were then relayed to Moore's team, who computerized and programmed access to this data bank.

By this letter, we enthusiastically advertise the existence, significance, and availability of the MGD. The database currently identifies 400 scientist-collections and represents 21 categories of accessions, including 3,000 accessions of viruses, 13,000 of bacteria, 25,000 of fungi, 120 of plant pathogenic nematodes, 1,400 of mycorrhizal fungi, and more than 2,000 of other organisms. Most accessions are plant pathogens; others include selected monoclonal antibodies, plasmids, and genetic constructs utilized in bioengineering. The database also includes the roster of viruses by state

for the 48 contiguous states, assembled by J. H. Hill et al.

By this letter, also, both the APS Collections & Germplasm Committee and the APS Council express appreciation for, and strongly endorse, this notable achievement. Future success of the MGD depends on its effective maintenance, upgrading, and utilization. APS Council encourages participation by members of APS and other societies, and welcomes sponsorship and funding by other interested organizations.

Even during development of the MGD, we witnessed losses of MGD resources through key-person retirements and responsibility changes. Further losses are inevitable. Maintenance and expansion of this no-cost-to-user database will constantly require new inputs: new commitment of contributors and users, and new support by sponsoring organizations.

In making requests of cataloged accessions, remember that this is a unique cop of users-suppliers, not a commercial enterprise. Cataloged accessions are the resources of individual research-teaching laboratories, and their distribution is a gesture of kindness of scientist-care-takers of these laboratory resources.

Logging in to MGD

MGD can be reached through the Internet in several ways. The two easiest are listed below. No password is required. For sites not connected to the

Internet, telephone modem access is available. Further information on modem connections is available from Joe Hanus, Oregon State University, at the number below.

Option 1

From any computer connected to the Internet:

- A. Telnet to bcc.orst.edu
- B. Log in as mgd
- C. Touch "Enter" at the prompt (no password needed); MGD Gopher will initiate action.

Option 2

From an Internet-connected computer with Gopher software installed:

- A. Type gopher bcc.orst.edu 70
- B. This results in immediate log-in to Gopher at the Biological Computing Consortium, Oregon State University.
- C. Select Microbial Germplasm Database from menu.

For more information, contact Larry Moore or Joe Hanus:

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