



FAO/WMO AGROMET-L agrometeorology Internet Conference

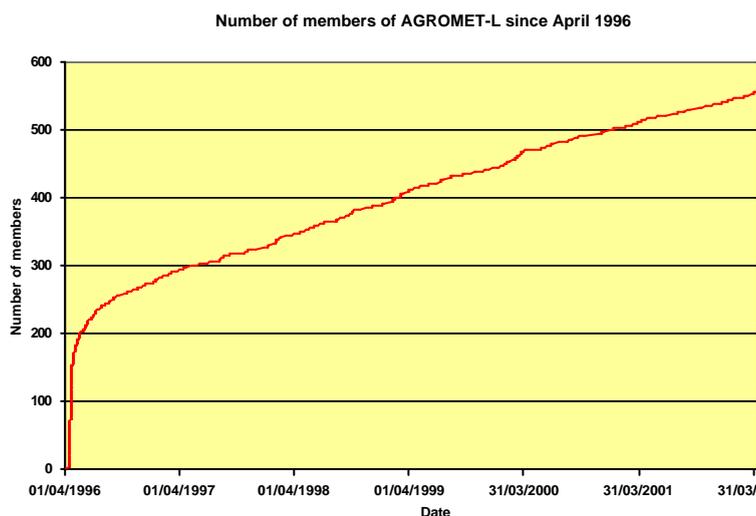
Origin and scope

The need for an Internet forum on agrometeorology was discussed at the meeting organized in Niamey, Niger on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the AGRHYMET Centre in 1994. The issue came up again at the meeting of the WMO Commission for Agricultural Meteorology (CAgM) in Cuba in 1995 when Venezuela, Costa Rica, Cuba and Mexico proposed a Latin American network on agrometeorology. Eventually, WMO and FAO set up the AGROMET-L Internet conference on the FAO server in Rome in April 1996.

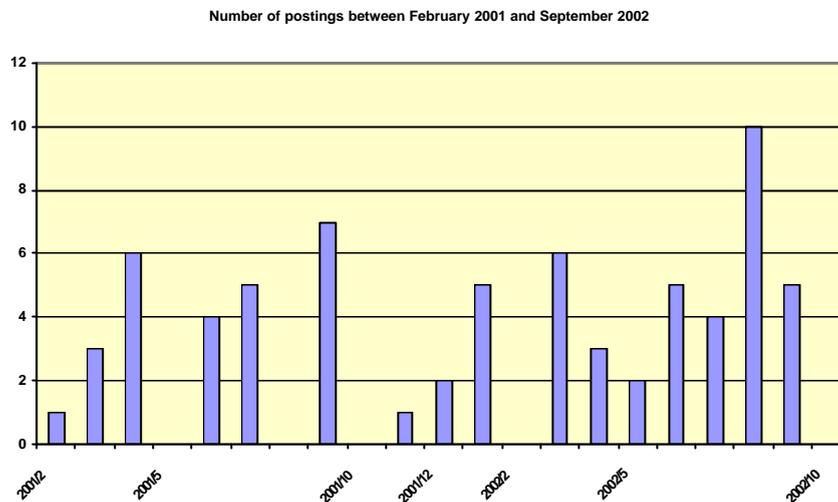
The scope of agrometeorology discussion list AGROMET-L is global; it aims at facilitating contacts between continents, developed and developing countries, and to promote the exchange of news, data, know-how, and the discussion of operational problems.

Membership

After the creation of the conference was announced on various related fora dealing with agricultural modelling (AGMODELS-L), climatology (CLIMLIST) and others, membership rose quickly to 200 participants in a couple of days, after which the increase was steady and amazingly linear.

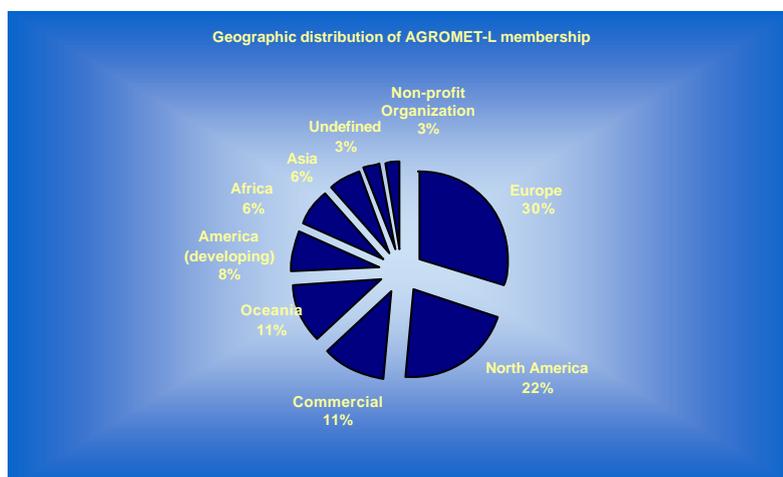


At mid-September 2002, AGROMET-L counted 575 members exchanging on average 4.5 messages per month.



About 40 % of messages regard various announcements, such as the creation of the International Society of Agrometeorology (INSAM), conferences, scholarships, jobs opportunities. The majority of postings (60%) are about technical queries on subjects like thermal time, the practical measurement of radiation, agrometeorological applications of model, techniques to assess actual evaporation using remote sensing, the applications of random weather generators...

The geographic distribution of members, as far as can be inferred from their email addresses, is given in the figure below.



Compared the situation in 1999, at a time when the forum had about 400 members, no major changes are observed, i.e. the graph confirms that our colleagues in the developing world still have limited access to the Internet. However, there are probably other factors as well. Discussions with colleagues at CAgM-XIII at Ljubljana pointed out the fact that the list is rather generic and that it occasionally overlaps with AGMODELS-L. The main reason, however, seems to be the use of the English language, although queries written in Spanish or in French have always received the same attention as postings in English.

How to join

All that is needed to join is a valid email address: send a message with a blank (empty) subject field to

mailserv@mailserv.fao.org

and write

subscribe agromet-L <email address>

in the body of message; <email address> stands for your email address. An automatic reply will be sent by the server giving practical details, such as available commands. For any additional queries about the operation of the conference, kindly send a message to agromet@fao.org.