

Literature Search Strategies and Resources

(Click on URL's or hotlinks to go directly to resource)

Search Strategies

- Access library article databases (or other, see below) at: <https://library2.usu.edu/inabs/>
- Under agriculture and business/economics you can use search engines with key words to find articles. The best search engines are Agricola, Econ Lit, AgEcon Search, CAB direct, and Business Source Premier.
- Experiment with search terms until you have captured an advanced-search combination that returns only relevant results and without missing any, e.g.: ("*cow calf*" OR *beef*) AND ("*e* coli*" OR "*gram negative*").
- Once you have downloaded several articles, you can use the reference lists of the articles to find additional articles on the subject.
 - Save your searches and set search alerts to be notified of new scholarship.
 - Pay attention to the sources that your sources cite most often and read and cite them yourself.
- Compile a description of all articles in an excel file (or other organization method, see below)
- Place all article PDFs in a folder (such as Box, Dropbox, etc.)

Search Engines

- USU Library Database (to find a database by subject or special category) at: <https://library.usu.edu>
- Scopus (“comprehensive” searching of scholarly journals)
- Google Scholar (“comprehensive” searching of scholarly and semi-scholarly content)
- ProQuest Dissertations and Theses (exhaustive full-text access to US and international dissertations)

Organize and Synthesize Sources

- Use a citation manager to track, organize, and cite sources. This guide helps you choose one and links to some tutorials on the major software options as well as contact information for librarians who can help.
- Options include Endnote, Reference Manager, Zotero, etc.

Online Resources

- Open UniUK: <https://www.open.ac.uk/library/finding-information-on-your-research-topic/how-do-i-do-a-literature-search>
- YouTube Video on conducting a literature search: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSVcSKpXhC4>
- YouTube Video on a literature search: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lm72cPIM-kU>
- YouTube Video on reading a research paper: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-eiG4BvO_k
- Find the liaison librarian for your department by going to library.usu.edu and clicking “Meet with a Librarian.” Your librarian will be happy to help you find the right databases for your search, construct an efficient advanced-search string, and organize your sources.\