Computer Practice Tips

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E-Mail: Easy Access

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E-mail (Electronic Mail) use has exploded in the last year or two, as millions of people gain access to the worldwide computer network called "The Internet." Even practitioners in rural practices (like ours) can cheaply and easily use E-mail to send and receive messages from almost any computer using their existing phone lines. The AABP has made a major commitment to the use of E-mail by setting up a group account scheme with MCI Mail, open to any AABP member, and by providing accounts for AABP offices in Rome and for each of our Directors. Already, much AABP business that would be conducted at much greater effort and expense by phone or in-person, is being conducted "over the wire."

An immediate benefit of Internet E-mail is that you may join (for free) the Internet "discussion groups" AABP-L, Dairy-L, Beef-L, or literally thousands of others covering interests from camels to Star Trek. When you join one of these groups, you automatically receive all messages sent to the group's mailbox. The atmosphere is informal, and an excellent way to keep abreast of news and events in our profession. Each group tends to have a distinctive flavor - Dairy-L and Beef-L have over 1,000 members between them, including animal scientists, Extension personnel, nutritionists, farmers, and many veterinarians. AABP-L is restricted to AABP members, and a place you can let your hair down a little more.

An important reason that AABP is promoting use of MCI Mail over other services like Compuserve and America Online is that MCI does not charge to receive messages from the Internet. After the annual fee of $35, there are no further charges to receive unlimited messages (by modem using a toll-free phone number). The free software (for IBM compatible computers) provided by MCI makes it easy to send, receive, and file messages.

You can have MCI fax you details and an enrollment form by calling 800-395-9972 and asking for document 30162, or speak to a representative by calling 800-759-3294. See you on the 'Net!

Getting the Most Out of Listserv

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Introduction

The listserv software package was developed in France during the late 1980's by Eric Thomas. It was developed for IBM mainframe computers on the Bitnet computer network. The software has been modified for other types of computers and now utilizes Internet addressing systems. The software has undergone incremental improvements since its inception, and improvements are likely to continue. The listserv commands below all

work at the time of the 1994 AABP conference. There is no guarantee that they will continue to work.

Commands do not vary from one listserv site to another. There are a great many options for each listserv list at a site, and differences in these options may lead a user to think that the listserv software varies between sites. While some minor variation may exist in the version of listserv software implemented, there is more potential for variation in the way lists are established. For example, AABP-L is a closed list and Dairy-L is a public list. When you subscribe to AABP-L, your request goes to the listowners. They then determine if you are qualified to join AABP-L (you are an AABP member). When you subscribe to Dairy-L, your request is automatically processed. If you have questions concerning the functioning of listserv commands at a specific site, contact a listowner at that site.

The purpose of this presentation is to highlight commonly used listserv commands, describe their function and provide an example of the command's syntax. The Dairy-L list is used for examples since it has the most members and mail of the bovine related listserv lists.

Send all Listserv software messages to

listserv@address
For example: listserv@umdd.umd.edu
    listserv@wsuvm1.csc.wsu.edu
Please note that listserv e-mail addresses and almost all commands are case insensitive (upper or lowercase doesn't matter). The address that follows the "@" sign is the same Internet address as that for the listname.

To join

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address, and put the following line in the body of the message:

sub Listname Firstname Lastname
For example, sub Dairy-L Mark Varner

To stop getting mail

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address, and put the following line in the body of the message:

Signoff Dairy-L
Singoff Beef-L
Signoff AABP-L

To signoff all Listserv lists with one message:
    Signoff * (netwide)
There is more than one way to stop receiving mail; the "signoff" command and the "set dairy-1 nomail. " If

you use the "signoff" command, then you must resubscribe when you want to start receiving mail. When you use the "set dairy-1 nomail" command, you remain a list subscriber, but you do not get mail. For a public list, like Dairy-L, there is little effective difference between the two commands. There is no delay from the time you resubscribe until you start getting mail. For a closed list, like AABP-L, if you "signoff", then the listowner must reapprove your membership before you start receiving mail. With AABP-L, when you use the "set AABP-L nomail" command you can resume mail with no delay after sending the appropriate command.

To Find Moderator Address or Member Address

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address, and put the following line in the body of the message:

Rev Listname by Option
For Example: Rev Dairy-L by country
For Example: Rev Dairy-L by name

You will receive a message with the listowner and subscriber addresses, like that in Table 1. The Internet addresses can then be used to communicate with the individuals of interest. The two options listed above (by country and by name) sort the names of the list subscribers by the option.

Table 1.   Example of list membership message.

```
From LISTSERV@UMDD.UMD.EDU Thu Aug 18 08:38:48 1994
Date: Thu, 18 Aug 1994 08:16:25 -0400
From: BITNET list server at UMDD <LISTSERV@UMDD.UMD.EDU>
To: Mark Varner <varner@UMD5.UMD.EDU>
Subject: File: "DAIRY-L LIST"

*
* Dairy Discussion List.
*
* Review= Public  Subscription= Open       Send= Public
* Notify= Yes      Reply-to= List,Respect   Files= No
* X-Tags= Yes      Stats= Normal,Owner      Ac= Yes
* Validate= Store Only      Errors-To= Owners
* Mail-via= Dist2
* Notebook= Yes,X/197,Weekly,Public
*
* Owner=  varner@umd5.umd.edu (Mark Varner)
* Owner=  CADY@WSUVM1 (Roger Cady)
* Owner=  Quiet:
* Owner=  varner@yorick.umd.edu
* Owner=  ANSC6@UMDD
*
=======================================
```

To Get a List of Commands

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following line in the body of the message:

Get listserv refcard

There is no period between the two words (filename and filetype). A 4 page list of abbreviated commands is returned by e-mail.

To Change Mail Options

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following line in the body of the message:

Set Listname Option
For Example: Set Dairy-L nomail
For Example: Set Dairy-L digest
For Example: Set Dairy-L mail

This message toggles between 3 options. Mail is the default. Each message is sent out as it is received. The digest option combines all e-mail messages into one message per day, which is sent around midnight. The nomail option suspends all e-mail messages, but keeps the subscription valid.

To Change Mail Options

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following line in the body of the message:

Set Listname Option
For Example: Set Dairy-L Ack
For Example: Set Dairy-L NoAck

This option changes whether or not you receive an acknowledgment of your posting. The default is usually set to Ack.

To Change Mail Options

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following line in the body of the message:

Set Listname Option
For Example: Set Dairy-L Repro
For Example: Set Dairy-L Norepro

This option changes whether or not you receive a copy of your own posting. The default is usually set to Norepro.

To Check on your Mail Options

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following line in the body of the message:

Query Listname
For Example: Query Dairy-L

To Find Out What Files Can Be Retrieved

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following line in the body of the message:

Index Listname
For Example: Index Dairy-L

The listserv software sends you a list of all files available for retrieval. Some lists do not store archives of messages, but most do; a list of the available archive files and any stored files associated with the list. For Dairy-L, these are files stored to answer a subscriber's question.

To Retrieve A File

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following line in the body of the message:

Get Filename Filetype
For Example: Get warts txt
For Example: Get dairy-1 log9409c

Note no period is used between file name and the file type on this IBM mainframe computer.

To Search Archives

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following lines in the body of the message:

//JOB
Database Search DD=Rules Echo=No
//Rules DD *
Search BGH in DAIRY-L
Print

You modify the 4th line for your needs. More much variation exists in how this fourth line can be configured. Some examples of options are listed below.

To Search Archives for more than one word

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following lines in the body of the message:

//JOB
Database Search DD=Rules Echo=No
//Rules DD *
Search BGH or bST in DAIRY-L
Print

The "and" is the default between words, and you do not have to insert an "and". You must specify the "or".

To Search Archives before, after or between dates

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following lines in the body of the message:

```
//JOB
Database Search DD=Rules Echo=No
//Rules DD *
Search warts in DAIRY-L since feb 94
Print
```

To Search Archives before, after or between dates

Sometimes you want to find a message that you remember from a certain time frame. In other cases, your search generates a large output. The listserv software has an upper limit to the amount of output that can be mailed back. Once the listserv software reaches the limit, no more output is sent. The "since date" command can be used to start a search that begins with the last date included in the previous search. The syntax for searching archives for messages before, after or between dates is as follows:

```
since date
from date to date
until date
```

The syntax for dates varies, and some examples are below.

```
yy
mm/yy
mm-yy
monthname yy
```

For more complete instruction on searching message archives

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address and put the following line in the body of the message:

```
Info Database
```

To Search Archives for Messages from an Address

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following line in the body of the message:

```
//JOB
Database Search DD=Rules Echo=No
//Rules DD *
Search SE=varner@umd5.umd.edu in Dairy-L
Print
```

Put the e-mail address of the person of interest after the "SE=". Sometimes individuals will have one or more equivalent address or addresses change over time. All different variations of the addresses must be used.

To Search Archives when the 4th Line is too long

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following lines in the body of the message:

```
//JOB
Database Search DD=Rules Echo=No
//Rules DD *
Search (bst or bgh or 'growth hormone') and mastitis -
but not conference in Dairy-L
Print
```

The dash at end of line means the next line is a continuation. No dashes are allowed within double quotes.

To Search Archives for Phrases

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following lines in the body of the message:

```
//JOB
Database Search DD=Rules Echo=No
//Rules DD *
Search 'growth hormone' in Dairy-L
Print
```

The single quotes are used to denote a phrase. The phrase is case insensitive.

To Search Archives for Exact Phrases

```
//JOB
Database Search DD= Rules Echo=No
//Rules DD *
Search "E. coli" in Dairy-L
Print
```

The double quotes are used to denote a phrase that *is case sensitive.*

To Search Archives and Change the Size of the Output

Send a message to the appropriate listserv address with the following lines in the body of the message:

```
//JOB
Database Search DD=Rules Echo=No
//Rules DD *
Search BGH in DAIRY-L
Print outlim=300
```

This command can be used to shorten output, reduce costs or to increase above default (2000 lines).