

**REQUEST FOR RECORDS DISPOSITION AUTHORITY**  
(See Instructions on reverse)

*24 Mar 1982*

LEAVE BLANK	
JOB NO	NC1-354-82-1
DATE RECEIVED	March 29, 1982
NOTIFICATION TO AGENCY	
In accordance with the provisions of 44 U.S.C. 3303a the disposal request, including amendments, is approved except for items that may be stamped "disposal not approved" or "withdrawn" in column 10	
<i>6-8-82</i> Date	<i>[Signature]</i> Archivist of the United States

**TO: GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION,  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE, WASHINGTON, DC 20408**

1. FROM (AGENCY OR ESTABLISHMENT)  
Economic Research Service, USDA

2. MAJOR SUBDIVISION  
National Economics Division

3. MINOR SUBDIVISION  
Food Economics Branch

4. NAME OF PERSON WITH WHOM TO CONFER

Ms. Dona Volz -records management	5. TEL EXT. 447-3372
Mr. Michael D. Weiss-program contact	447-9200

6. CERTIFICATE OF AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE

I hereby certify that I am authorized to act for this agency in matters pertaining to the disposal of the agency's records; that the records proposed for disposal in this Request of 1 page(s) are not now needed for the business of this agency or will not be needed after the retention periods specified.

A Request for immediate disposal.

B Request for disposal after a specified period of time or request for permanent retention.

C. DATE <i>3/11/82</i>	D. SIGNATURE OF AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE <i>[Signature]</i>	E. TITLE Chief, Records, Systems, and Analysis Branch
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7. ITEM NO.	8. DESCRIPTION OF ITEM (With Inclusive Dates or Retention Periods)	9. SAMPLE OR JOB NO.	10. ACTION TAKEN
1	<p><u>Automated Weather/Yield System</u></p> <p>This computerized system contains monthly records of temperature (in degrees Fahrenheit) and precipitation (in inches of precipitation) for each climatic division of each of the 48 contiguous U. S. states, for the period January, 1931 to the present. (The climatic divisions are used by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and represent state subregions within which the climate is relatively homogenous.) The data base is used to serve a variety of research and information needs involving an understanding of the influence of weather on U. S. agriculture. Arranged by state and thereunder by climatic division. 2 reels of magnetic tape.</p> <p><u>Disposition:</u> a) Record copy. <u>PERMANENT</u>. Transfer in annual segments to the National Archives with appropriate documentation.</p> <p>b) Agency copy. Maintain until no longer required for research.</p>		<i>2 items</i>

Item 1

Automated Weather/Yield System (WEA), 1931 - present. Accumulation is less than one reel per year. Arranged by state and thereunder by state climatic division.

The Automated Weather/Yield System (WEA) contains information on both temperature and precipitation for 344 climatic divisions throughout the 48 contiguous United States. Each climatic division represents a geographic area (up to ten per state) where the climate is relatively homogeneous. Temperature data is presented as degrees Fahrenheit and precipitation as inches of precipitation. Monthly averages are available from January 1931 until the present. The file represents a special compilation of data routinely maintained by NOAA's National Climatic Center.

Recommendation: PERMANENT. Transfer in annual segments to the National Archives with appropriate documentation.

Justification: Agriculture represents one of the major segments of the nation's economy. While its condition is dependent on many variables, including percentage of the population engaged in agriculture, farm prices, real estate values, etc., one major facet far outweighs all of the others. This is weather. No matter how much capital is available for investment or how many acres are set aside for farming, insufficient precipitation or abnormal temperatures can retard or entirely curtail agricultural activities. On the other hand the reverse can account for record production levels and their ensuring benefits. Any study of American agriculture will require at least basic meteorological information.

The Automated Weather/Yield System contains such information in a readily usable form. By providing monthly data on temperatures and precipitation for "local" climatic areas (which are easily comparable to farm production regions) over an extended period of time, the impact of weather on agricultural output can be closely monitored. The design of the system is such that it may be linked with other national agricultural files routinely produced by the USDA. These include data on monthly crop and livestock production, annual farm income, and farm prices. Each of these files, which previously have been appraised for permanent retention, contain data at state and regional production levels and many contain monthly data for a comparable time period.

WEA provides significant information at frequent intervals and at an adequate level of detail to accurately portray basic weather information over time in the agricultural areas of America. Its coverage allows an examination of many components of the agricultural economy, especially

when viewed in relation to other files produced by the Federal government. While data in this file is duplicated in records of the National Climatic Center, an attempt to recreate the file in its present format would require considerable time and expense.