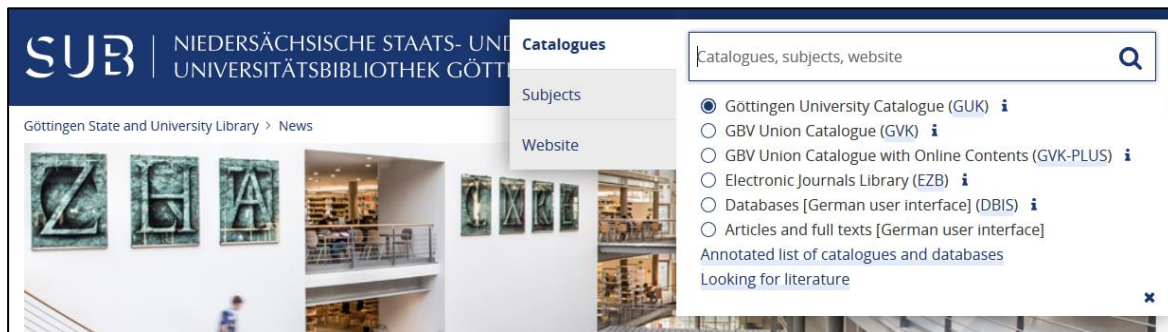


# Introduction to Literature Search for Agricultural Sciences

## Handout

### Where do you start with your search?

To start your literature search, go to the homepage of the Göttingen State and University Library: [www.sub.uni-goettingen.de](http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de). From this page, you can access licenced electronic journals, e-books, and databases on and off campus.

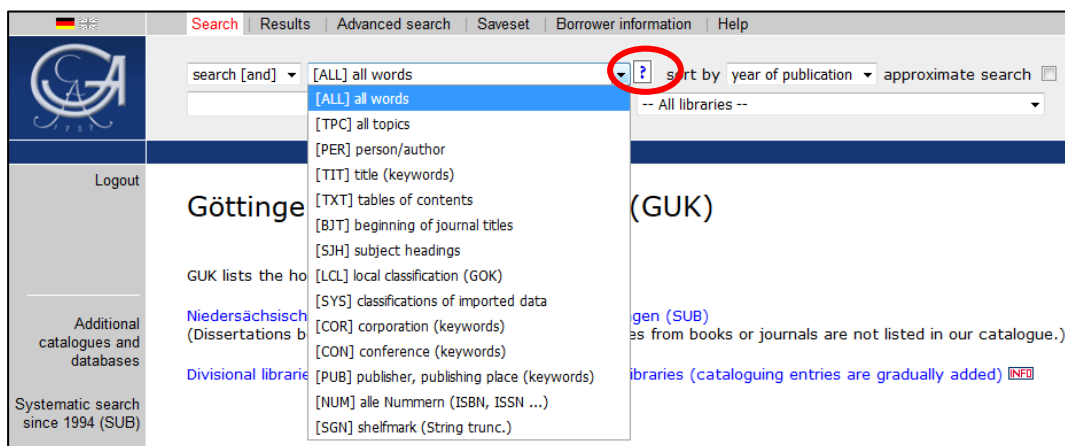


Screenshot of the homepage of the [SUB Göttingen](http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de) containing a picture by Claudia Hake and Nils Windisch -CC BY-NC-ND 3.0

### Göttingen University Catalogue (GUK)

In the Göttingen University Catalogue (GUK), you will find literature available in the libraries of the University of Göttingen. Please note that you can search for books and journals in this catalogue but not for journal articles or book chapters.

#### The most important search keys (right pulldown-menu)



Screenshot of the [Göttingen University Catalogue \(GUK\)](http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de)

Click on the question mark  to receive some tips for using the search keys.



All words [ALL]:

Search in all categories: keywords, first and last names, publishers and places of publication. This is a convenient way to search for authors and book titles at the same time.

All topics [TPC]:

This search key is designed for topic search. It allows you to search for keywords (in titles) and key terms (terms that describe the content). Recommended search: add a question mark “?” at the end of the word stem to search for words with different endings.

Person, author [PER]:

Names must be entered in the following order: Last name, First name. If you are not certain about the exact first name, simply leave it out or place a question mark „?” after the initial letter.

Beginning of journal titles [BJT]:

Journal titles must be provided in the correct word order. If the title is too long, type in several words/characters and add a question mark “?” at the end.

## GBV Union Catalogue (GVK)

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In the GBV Union Catalogue (GVK), you can order books and articles available outside of the University of Göttingen via inter-library loan.

## Electronic Journals Library (EZB)

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The EZB contains electronic journals. The availability of texts in the EZB is shown with the so-called “traffic light box”. Please note that you can search for articles only on the websites of journals, but not in the EZB itself.

## Databases (DBIS)

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Here you will find a wide range of databases for agricultural science. Select [Land- und Forstwirtschaft](#), [Gartenbau](#), [Fischereiwirtschaft](#), [Hauswirtschaft](#), [Ernährung](#) from the list ‘*Fachübersicht*’ (*Subject areas*). In the list of top-databases, you will find ‘*AgEcon Search*’ and ‘*Web of Science*’. Select a database from the list and research your topic. The SFX/SUB-button (if available) located next to the title of an article shows you options to access the full text.

### Web of Science



#### 2. **Social Capital and Sustainable Coffee Certifications in Costa Rica**

By: Snider, Anna; Afonso Gallegos, Ana; Gutierrez, Isabel; et al.  
HUMAN ECOLOGY Volume: 45 Issue: 2 Pages: 235-249 Published: APR 2017



Screenshot in the database [Web of Science](#)

To access full texts from ‘*Web of Science*’, use the SUB-button .



 pdf

**From Economic Vulnerability to Sustainable Livelihoods: The Case of the Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperatives Union (OCFCU) in Ethiopia**  
 Meskela, Tadess ; Teshome, Yalem

As the fast growing agribusiness cooperative in Ethiopia, Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union, OCFCU was established in 1999 by 34 cooperatives with \$90,000 USD in ca [...]

01 July 2014 | Journal Article

Screenshot in the database [AgEcon Search](#)

If you are using the database 'AgEcon Search', look for the button  .

You can also have access to full texts in licenced databases, e-journals, and e-books **from off campus** (e.g. from home):

- Select a database, a journal, or an e-book of your choice in the Database system DBIS, Electronic Journals Library (EZB), or the Göttingen University Catalogue (GUK).
- The log-in page of the authentication server HAN will require you to log in with your user number, which you find on the back of your student ID, and your library password.
- This video takes you through the main steps: <https://youtu.be/H2qnb8t2sng>

**Tip:** Always access databases via DBIS. This way, you will have access to full texts licenced by the Göttingen State and University Library.

## Searching for titles from a bibliography

It is important to distinguish between different types of publication (book, article in an edited volume, journal article etc.). Based on the publication type, you can select relevant search tools, e.g. Göttingen University Catalogue (GUK), Electronic Journals Library (EZB), or subject-specific databases (e.g. *AgEcon Search*, *Web of Science* etc.).

### Example of a monograph:

- GEMAN, H. (2015): Agricultural finance. From crops to land, water and infrastructure. The Wiley finance series. John Wiley and Sons Inc, Chichester, West Sussex, United Kingdom.

### Example of an article from an edited collection:

- DREYER, H. and S. ANDERS (2015): Survive with Caffeine. Trade Duration and Survival of Coffee Exports. In: Mußhoff, O. (Ed.): Neuere Theorien und Methoden in den Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften des Landbaus. 54. Jahrestagung der Gesellschaft für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften des Landbaues e. V. vom 17. bis 19. September 2014. Schriften der Gesellschaft für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften des Landbaues, Issue 50. Landwirtschaftsverlag, Münster: 481–485.

## Example of a journal article:

- GRABS, J., B. KILIAN, D. C. HERNANDEZ and T. DIETZ (2017): Understanding Coffee Certification Dynamics. A Spatial Analysis of Voluntary Sustainability Standard Proliferation. In: International Food and Agribusiness Management Review 19 (3): 31–56.

**Note:** The examples presented above were created according to the citation style „GJAE - German Journal of Agricultural Economics“.

In contrast to Google, scholarly databases as well as the library catalogue require correct input of search terms. There is no automatic replacement of misspelled terms with similar or related terms. However, you can search for terms with different word endings with the help of wildcard operators (truncation, see p. 5).

## Searching for literature on a specific topic: search terms

Find terms that describe your topic. Leave out abbreviations.

Topic: „**The Impact of Sustainable Agricultural Initiatives – A Case Study on Coffee**“

| Aspects          | Sustainable agricultural initiatives                                      | Coffee                                                                        |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Generic terms    | Sustainable initiatives                                                   | Food, agricultural product                                                    |
| Specific terms   | Farmers' cooperatives                                                     | Coffee beans                                                                  |
| Synonyms         | Interest groups, sustainable incentive measures, sustainable cooperatives | Caffeine-containing hot beverage                                              |
| Translated terms | Nachhaltige landwirtschaftliche Initiativen                               | Kaffee                                                                        |
| Related terms    | Fair trade, sustainable concepts, sustainability system                   | Coffee plant, coffee plantation, coffee cultivation, coffee trade, tea, cocoa |

**Tip:** Use dictionaries of your subject area or thesauri of your subject-specific databases to search for synonyms, generic terms, specific terms, as well as terms related to your topic.

E.g. EconBiz: <http://zbw.eu/stw/version/latest/about> (in German)

# Searching for literature on a specific topic: search strategies

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## Snowballing:

- Use your key sources for further literature search by exploring footnotes and references for other relevant sources.
- This also applies to databases and library catalogues. In the description of the document (book, article), you will find keywords and subject tags. By clicking on them, you can obtain thematically relevant results.

In the Göttingen University Catalogue (GUK) and in every database, you can choose between **simple and advanced** search. Advanced search is especially helpful if you wish to combine several search terms or limit your search to certain aspects.

**Truncation:** Also known as wildcard searching. Replace one or more characters at the end of your search term with an asterisk (\*) or a question mark (?). This will considerably increase the number of search results. Truncation is especially relevant to topic search. It allows you to combine singular, plural forms, and other word variations in one search query.

E.g.: a search for *sustain\** -> will also retrieve *sustainable, sustained, sustainability*

**Phrase search:** Put a phrase into quotation marks to ensure the exact word/character sequence of your search terms in the search results.

E.g.: „Fair trade“, „climate change“ or „South-East Asia“

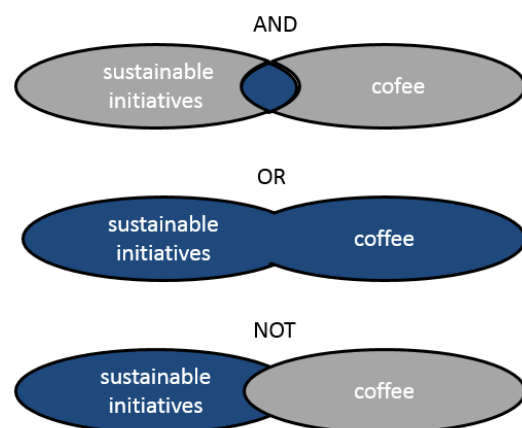
## Combine different search queries with the help of Boolean operators:

**AND:** used to reduce the number of search results: All search terms must appear in the results. This is a default setting in many catalogues and databases. In our example, the terms „sustainable initiatives“ and „coffee“ must appear together.

**OR:** used to increase the number of search results. At least one of the search terms must appear in the results. In this example, „sustainable initiatives“, „coffee“, or both terms must appear in the results.

**NOT:** used to reduce the number of results. The engine will search for the first term, but not for the second one. With NOT you can exclude words from the search results.

You will find helpful tips in the tab „**Help**“ in the Göttingen University Catalogue (GUK).



## What did you find? – Assessing the results

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### Too few results?

- Check the terms you use in your search: try synonyms, generic terms or translations
- Use wildcard operators, e.g. an asterisk (\*), a question mark (?)
- Use less keyword in one search query
- Use broader terms

### Too many results?

- Use specific search terms
- Add another aspect to your search strategy
- Apply formal filters of databases → e.g. limit the publication years of your search results to the last 5 years only, set the language, publication form etc.

## Contacts and Tips

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You will find various tools and techniques for academic research in the section „Learning and teaching“ on the website of the Göttingen State and University Library: [www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/-DtZHH](http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/-DtZHH) Further self-study materials (in German and English) are available here: [www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/-KYCSA](http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/-KYCSA)

Reference management programmes such as Citavi and Zotero help to collect, organise, and cite literature. The Göttingen State and University Library offers courses and study materials on these programmes: [www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/-Aa7VJ](http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/-Aa7VJ)

The international Writing Centre of the University of Göttingen offers courses and consultations on writing process and text composition: [www.uni-goettingen.de/en/512913.html](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/512913.html)

The University of Göttingen has prepared information (including a quiz) on the topic of plagiarism: [www.uni-goettingen.de/en/519762.html](http://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/519762.html)

Subject-oriented tips for research and specific search tools can be found on the subject-information pages of the Göttingen State and University Library: [www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/-7g7uX](http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/-7g7uX)

Should you have further questions, please contact our librarians at the circulation desk: [information@sub.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:information@sub.uni-goettingen.de) or give us a call: [+49 551 39-5231](tel:+49551395231).

We wish you the best of luck with your projects!