# Simple Searching of CAB Abstracts with CAB Direct

## The CAB Direct Home Page



This is the CAB Direct Home Page, offering a simple, "Google like" search box, plus links to the CAB Thesaurus and "MyCABDirect". This search screen allows users to perform simple, single or multi-word searches. As with a Google search, users can use Natural Language, as in the example below:

### The housing of cattle in Europe

In a Natural Language search, the system will automatically select just the important words, in this case, **Housing**, **Cattle** and **Europe**, and will ignore all the other irrelevant terms. The search is performed by clicking the green **Search** button, when the selected terms will be searched with an "invisible" AND between them. The resulting list of records will contain all three keywords. The same search can also be performed by simply typing in the individual search terms or "Keywords", as they as commonly known, as shown below:

### housing cattle europe

The terms will be combined with **AND**, as before, with the same search result.

## Truncation:

When searching for several words that have the same beginning, or stem, the use of truncation can save time.  For unlimited Truncation, use the asterisk (*), as in the following example:

**Nutri\***

This will search for words starting with NUTRI and will retrieve NUTRIA, NUTRIENT, NUTRIENTS, NUTRITION, etc.

## Phrase Searching:

Sometimes a user will want to search for a more specific phrase, rather than searching for individual, single words, and combining them with **AND**.  An example might be the search term **cattle housing**.  To specify a phrase search, simply enclose the phrase in double quotation marks, as shown below.

**"cattle housing"**

Phrases and single words can be searched in combination, and will be linked with **AND**, as in the following example.

**"cattle housing" europe "animal welfare"**

The retrieved records will contain all three search terms "**AND**ed" together.

Note that, whenever you enter more than one search term, whether it is a single word or a phrase, the system will combine them with **AND**.  The **AND** operator is "implied", and doesn't need to typed into your search statement, but you can type it in, if you wish to, as shown below.

**"cattle housing" AND europe AND "animal welfare"**

The **AND** may be typed in upper case or in lower case.

## Linking Search Terms with "Boolean Operators":

The **AND** operator, discussed above, is one of three commonly used "search operators" called "Boolean Operators".  The other two Boolean Operators are **OR** and **NOT**, and can be used to modify or refine your search.  You may be interested in research papers about cattle or sheep or horses.  If we simply type in the three terms **cattle sheep horses**, we would retrieve only records that contained all three terms.  They would be **AND**ed together.  We would not find any records that simply included just one or two of the terms.  This would seriously limit our search.  In this particular example, we want to find records that contain all the words or any of the words.

To do this, we can use the **OR** operator, as in the following example:

**cattle OR sheep OR horses**

This search will find records that contain either one or more of the three search terms. The **OR** operator "expands" the search. The search gets larger as you **OR** more terms together.

The third Boolean Operator is **NOT**, and can be used to exclude terms from your search. You may be interested in **breeding** but <u>not</u> **genetics**. To do this, use the **NOT** operator, as shown below:

**breeding NOT genetics**

This search will find all the records containing the word **breeding**, but will exclude any record that includes the word **genetics**. The **NOT** operator will restrict your search, making it smaller. Use the **NOT** operator with caution, as you may loose relevant records by accident.

<u>**Multiple Boolean Operators:**</u>

We have seen how to use each Boolean Operator separately but, in many searches, it is useful to be able to use two or more of these operators together, in a single, complex search statement. Let us imagine that we want to do a search for records about the breeding of sheep or cattle or horses but that we are not interested in papers about genetics. We need to find all the records about cattle or sheep or horses and, from this group, or set of records, we need to find the records that also include the term breeding. Finally, we need to exclude the records that contain the word genetics. In this search, we need to use **AND**, **OR** and **NOT**, as shown below:

**cattle OR sheep OR horses AND breeding NOT genetics**

Before we run the search, there is one more thing that we need to do. We must tell the search system the order in which to do the search. Firstly, we want to find **cattle OR sheep OR horses**, and then we want to combine this group (or set) of records with the word **breeding** and, once this second operation has been completed, the final operation is to remove the records containing the word **genetics**. To specify the order of the search, we use parentheses or round brackets to enclose the three, separate operations. We want the **OR** operation done first, so we enclose the **OR**ed terms in one set of brackets, as shown here:

**(cattle OR sheep OR horses) AND breeding NOT genetics**

Now we want to do the **AND** operation, so we enclose this in a second set of brackets:

**((cattle OR sheep OR horses) AND breeding) NOT genetics**

And, because the **NOT** operation is outside both sets of brackets, this will be performed last. We can now click the Search button and the search will now be performed correctly, in the order in which we want it done.

With a little practice, the use of Boolean Operators, and brackets, can be used to produce complex and precise search statements which will retrieve good, relevant results.

## Search Results:

The results of a search are displayed in a short record format on the "**Search Results**" screen, as shown on the next page. The records are displayed in date order, with the record that has been added to the database most recently, displayed first, at the top of this list. This ensures that you always see the latest records first, which is important if you are running the same search on a regular basis. There is also a clickable option to display the records by relevance, with the most relevant record shown first.



On this page, the records are displayed with the Article Title, the Bibliographic Details and a short section of the Abstract. By default, you see 10 records at a time, but the display range can be reset to show up to 100 at a time from the drop down list, highlighted in the screenshot below.

To view the complete database record either click the record title or the "**View Abstract**" link, at the bottom of each record.  This will take you to the Full record display screen.

## Refining Search Results:

To the left of the displayed records, is a list of options to "Refine Results". These expandable lists of search terms have been built from the current search results, by analyzing the content of the retrieved records. The most frequently occurring terms, names, codes and dates, that appear in the various fields of the database records, are listed in order of occurrence and, next to each term, is the number of records, from the current results list, that contain that particular term, name, code or date.

Each entry in a list is a clickable, search link which, if clicked, will refine or limit the current search to records containing that particular entry. The full list of Refine options is shown on the next page.

**Refine Results**

Refine your search.
- ▼ Specific Topic
  - cattle sheds (4,206)
  - cattle (3,286)
  - cattle housing (2,828)
  - Cattle housing (1,319)
  - cowsheds (1,216)
  - more...
- ▸ Subject Category (CABICODE)
- ▸ Year of publication
- ▸ Source Title
- ▸ Author
- ▸ Geographic location
- ▸ Language
- ▸ Full Text
- ▸ Your Subscriptions

**The Refine options include:**

| Specific Topic | CABI's controlled indexing terms, used to index all the major concepts in the original article. Useful for finding just the really important papers. |
| --- | --- |
| Subject Category (CABICODES) | Concept codes, and associated headings, used to code for broad subject areas. |
| Year of Publication | Year of Publication of the original article. |
| Source Title | Title of the publication in which the article was published. |
| Author | Personal and corporate authors and editors names. |
| Geographic Location | Terms used to index important geographical concepts in the original article. |
| Language | Language of the original article. |
| Full Text | This link will limit your search results to database records with links to CABI's Free Full Text database. |
| Your Subscriptions | This link allows user to limit their results to records from, or relating to, particular CABI databases. |

To view the lists, expand them by clicking on them. Click "**more…**" to expand the list fully, as required. To Refine your search, simply click your chosen entry. A new search will be run, which will combine this new entry with your previous search, refining the results to a smaller, more relevant list of records. In the following screenshot, we have **Refined** our original search for **"Cattle Housing"** to the "Geographic Location" **USA**.
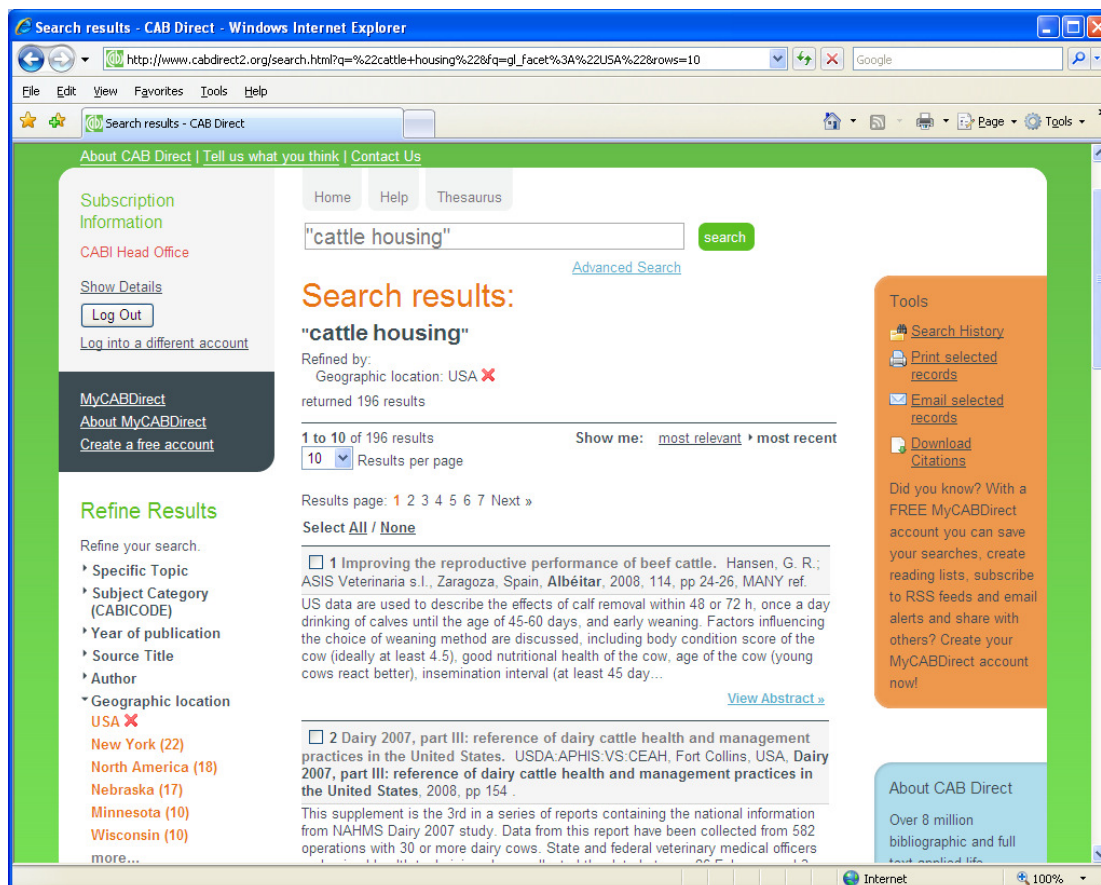


## Outputting Records:

Once you have completed your search, you will want to print or export the results. There are three basic output options, available in the orange box marked "**Tools**". These are:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Print Selected Record:** | To print to a printer. |
| **Email Selected Records:** | To email records. |
| **Download Citations:** | To export or save records electronically. |

To output records, you first have to select the records in which you are interested. Records can be selected, individually, by checking the small box to the top left of the record. If you want to output all the records displayed on the current page, you can do this by clicking the link **Select All**, that appears just above the first record. This will check all the records displayed on the current page. Records can now be output by choosing one of the three options to **Print**, **Email** or **Download**. Each of these options will offer you the choice of three formats, **Citation Only**, **Citation + Abstract** and **Full record**.

Complete any other information required, such as email address, and then click the **Submit** button, to complete the process.

**Search History:**

As you search, a History is created, which lists all the searches performed in the current search session.  To see this list, simply click on the "Search History" link in the orange "Tools" box to the right of the Search Results screen.  This will display the **Search History** screen, as shown below.
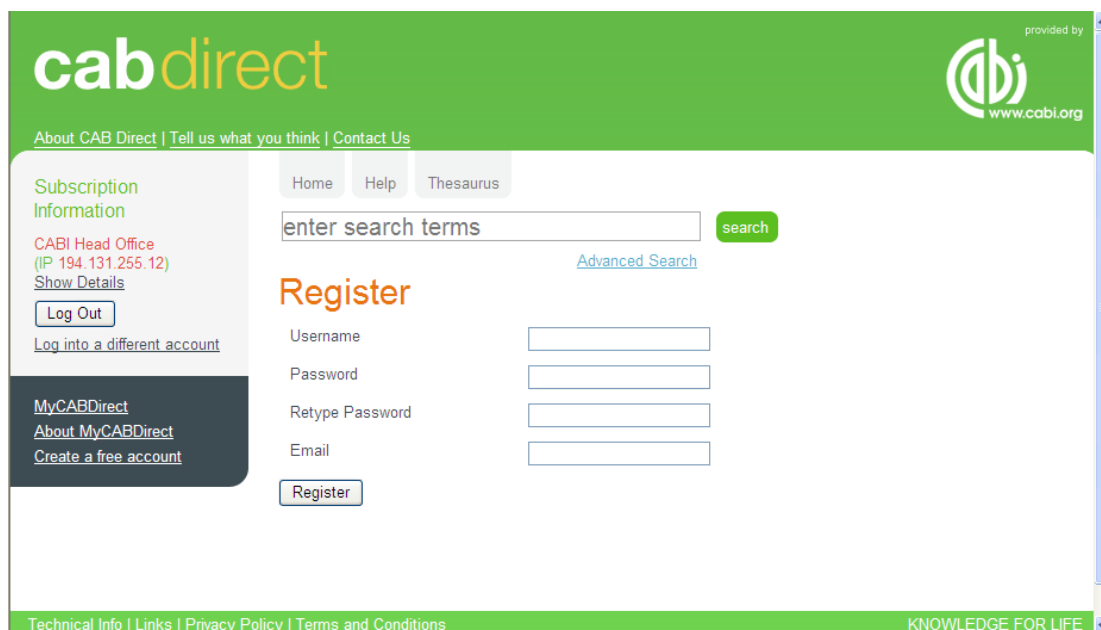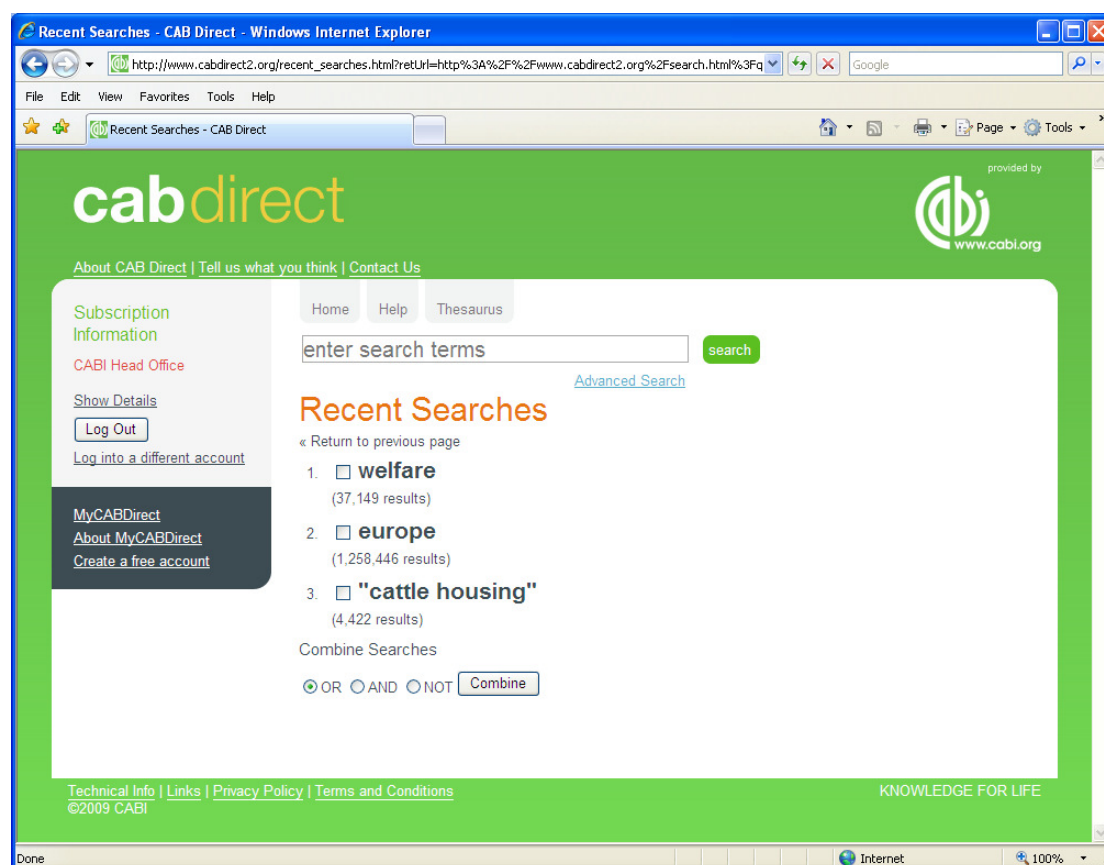


This screen shows the searches and the results.  You can re-run any of the searches in the list by simply clicking on the search string ("**cattle housing**", for example).  You can also use this screen to combine the results from different searches, to create a new search.  In the example, shown above, we might wish to combine all three searches together with **AND** to retrieve records on the welfare of cattle housing in Europe.  To combine searches, simply check the box next to the searches you wish to combine, select the Boolean Operator you wish to use (AND, OR or NOT), and click the "**Combine**" button.  A fourth search "set" will be created comprising all the relevant records.  Note, this Search History is not saved when you Logout. However, if you wish to save a search to re-use at a later date, you can do this by signing up to a "MyCABDirect" account.
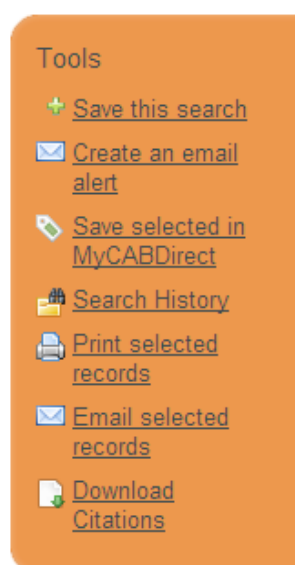
**MyCABDirect:**

If you set up a personal MyCABDirect account, you can personalise the site and make use of some additional, useful features of CAB Direct.

To create a free, MyCABDirect account, simply click the "**Create a free account**" link in the grey box to the left of the screen. You will see the following registration screen:



After you have filled in the details, click the "**Register**" button to create your account. Each time you use CAB Direct, you can Log in to your MyCABDirect account, by clicking the "**MyCABDirect**" link and entering your personal username and password. When you have logged into your account, you will be able to Save Search Histories, Bookmark individual database records, set up Automatic Email Alerts and RSS feeds.

If you click the **MyCABDirect** link, you will be taken to your personalised, MyCABDirect page, where you will see all your temporary searches, your permanently saved searches and your Bookmarke records.
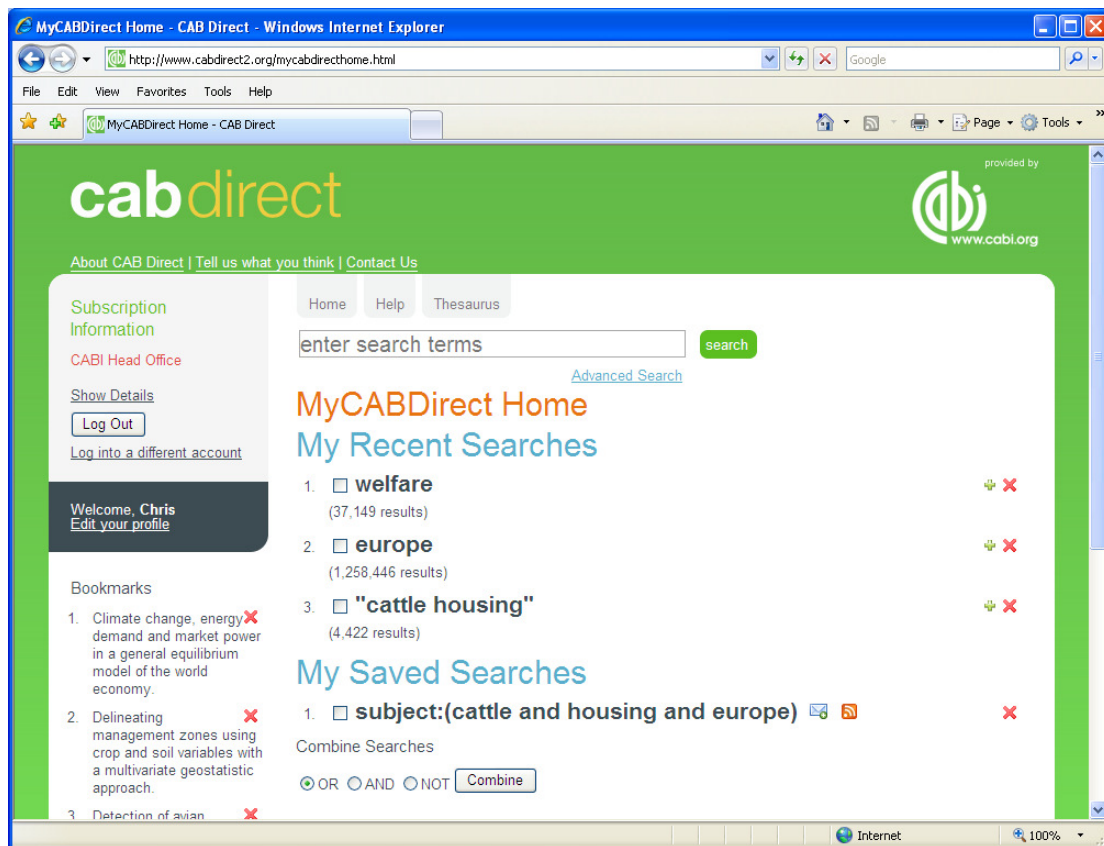


From this page, you can combine searches and display Bookmarked records, by clicking on the relevant record.  You can also set up weekly Email Alerts and RSS Feeds, by clicking on the icons provided.

And that's the end of this Simple Tutorial.