

1. Introduction

Research work at Narrabri Agricultural Research Station (NARS) is divided into two major components (i) field or laboratory work involving running experiments and gathering data, and (ii) the analysis, documentation, discussion, presentation and extension of the results of that work. The latter point is extensively computer based.

Research computer facilities at NARS have already proved themselves to be invaluable for the development of application packages for decision support such as SIRATAC, hydroLOGIC and entomoLOGIC, statistical analyses, general data processing, simulation modelling, word processing and presentation graphics. Much of the work completed in the last few years would have been difficult or impossible without adequate computer facilities.

Hardware and software maintenance is essential to optimise the use of the DEC computer system, recently upgraded through CSP23C and to ensure a reliable service in a critical multi-user environment. The DEC system is again being upgraded to reduce maintenance costs and facilitate advanced networking with access to the world-wide Internet..