NIH Image 1.60 - A Cost Effective Image Analysis Software for Undergraduate Biology Laboratories

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NIH Image is a public domain image analysis software originally written by Wayne Rasband at the National Institute of Mental Health. This software allows students to quantify aspects of digitized images captured from a microscope, scanner, video camera or other sources. Area, length and perimeter are all easily calculated with minimal time investment. Additionally, images can be stacked to create time lapse animations.

NIH Image, available in both Macintosh and Windows95 formats, can be downloaded from the NIH Image Home Page (http://rsb.info.nih.gov/nih-image). The FTP site is zippy.nimh.nih.gov. There is a searchable archive of FAQs (frequently asked questions) at gopher://gopher.soils.umn.edu. A monthly update of the archives can be viewed at http//:www.soils.agri.umn.edu/infoserv/lists/nih-image/archives. The Center for Image Processing in Education (http://www.cipe.com/CIPE/) offers workshops nationwide for more formal training in NIH Image. A copy of NIH Image 1.56 is in the Shareware/Freeware folder of the 1995 BioQuest™ Library CD-Rom (http://www.beloit.edu/~bquest/). Starfish development lab exercises utilizing this version are in the First Review Folder of the BioQuest CD under Image Analysis.

Initial student responses on the use of this software for independent projects in our introductory course have been positive. We currently have six 7500/275 Power Macs with built-in video capture capabilities which are connected to Scientific FlexCams. These machines were used by 40 lab groups during the Spring 1998 semester. We anticipate the purchase of six more machines with microscope video capture cameras to augment student use.

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