
Editorial

As I sit here at the turn of the year, it's been interesting to reflect on how things have changed in the last few years I have been editing the WPSJ. Certainly there have been technological advances, with the creation of the online submission system, advances in search facilities via new technology at Cambridge University Press, and better and more affordable accessing of papers, including the recent 'hiring' of full papers for a 24 hour period at a very affordable price. In addition, the editorial team have enjoyed the support from the WPSA Board members, who have been very encouraging to our small team, for which I would like to extend my gratitude. We have seen the journal go from the strength to strength, first increasing and then maintaining a good impact factor year on year. As a small journal, which is rather specialised and only comes out four times a year, we do rather well in keeping up there with the major agricultural journals. Interestingly, in 2012, the impact factor of all the agricultural journals fell slightly by about 10%. What changes this reflects within the 'publishing' aspect of our sector has not been determined, but certainly the squeeze on research funding and time for people to write papers must be a factor. Many of the stronger journals are relying on 'self citation' of papers to maintain their presence – but fortunately this is not the case for the WPSJ, which seems to be holding its own. In fact, we have more papers being submitted now than ever before. Although I'm writing this in December 2011, we already have the June and most of the September issues filled for 2012. One problem this creates is that authors will find there is a longer 'lag time' between submission and publication – for which I apologise, but we have to take each paper in sequence to get them out in any sort of timely fashion. In some areas we still struggle to find suitable reviewers, so if anyone out there has sufficient expertise, please register online as a reviewer, stating the areas you are qualified to report on. Please note that reviewers have a heavy responsibility in terms of maintaining the quality of the reviews we put out (and I get the complaints!), so only put down those areas where you have full confidence in your experience. We very much appreciate the time reviewers give us free of charge for reviewing papers.

This issue again covers quite a range of topics, with some papers in two parts or as separate reviews of similar aspects. I trust readers will find them interesting and useful, and as always, whilst we endeavour to keep the diversity within each issues, sometimes, at random, the same topics will crop up at similar intervals.

I trust all our readers had some kind of seasonal break (which I am also endeavouring to do at time of writing), wherever you are in the world, during the New Year and that 2012 is turning out to be a prosperous and rewarding year for you all. I hope to see many of you at the 2012 WPC, which is the big event for WPSA this year in Brazil.

Dr Lucy Waldron

Editor