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SSSA PUBLICATION POLICY

Soil Science Society of America (revised 2 November 1995)

Publication Policy

The initial policy statement was prepared by the 1963 Organization and Policy Committee of SSSA to provide details not covered in the Bylaws of SSSA. The publication policy is intended to provide members of the Society a more complete statement of policy than has been available heretofore and to answer most questions about policy and procedures for different kinds of subject matter and publications. The policy is subject to change at will by the Board of Directors within the broad limits set by the Bylaws.

I. General Policy

1. Publications of the Soil Science Society of America are under the supervision of the editorial board, which consists of (a) the editor-in-chief, (b) the managing editor, (c) technical editors, (d) enough associate editors to carry out editorial duties promptly and to provide each division with at least one associate editor, (e) editors appointed for temporary service on particular publications, and (f) the executive vice president and the associate executive vice president as ex officio members.

2. Membership in the Society is not a requirement for publication in *SSSA Journal*. However, nonmembers will be charged an additional amount, to be determined by the Board of Directors, in page charges for the first four published pages of a manuscript; nonmember authors will pay the same production charges as members for pages after four. The basis for making a decision on charging nonmember page charges will be the author's membership status on the date the manuscript is accepted for publication. Membership as used in this context includes active, emeritus, graduate student, and undergraduate student membership in the Soil Science Society of America, the Crop Science Society of America, or the American Society of Agronomy.

3. Costs of publication are met by dues and other Society income and by page and production charges to authors or their sponsoring organizations as determined from time to time by the Board of Directors. Publication charges to authors may be waived upon application to the President when scientific merit and financial hardship may be demonstrated. Society members must be given a one-year notice before a change in operating procedure for page and production charges can be put into effect.

4. All material intended for publication by the Society should be written in English and should be sent to the editor or, for publications other than the *SSSA Journal*, to a special editor appointed by the SSSA President.

5a. In matters of review, revision, and approval of manuscripts, the editorial board corresponds directly with the authors.

5b. A technical editor committee of the editorial board con-

sisting of the editor-in-chief, editor, and technical editors will make decisions concerning requests for rapid publication, publication of symposia, and other related matters. This committee may consult with associate editors for additional opinion as appropriate. This committee will seek and approve invited papers for *SSSA Journal*.

6. Volunteered papers which are not a part of any organized symposium at annual meetings of the Society do not require release by the editor-in-chief. Such papers, however, may not be published elsewhere before the oral or poster presentation. Symposium and invited papers based on oral or poster presentations are released automatically for publication by the American Society of Agronomy or the Crop Science Society of America upon notification of the editor-in-chief. However, SSSA encourages that papers presented at Society meetings be published in Society publications.

II. Procedures and Regulations for Different Types of Contributions

A. Original Research Findings

1. "Original research findings" are interpreted to mean the outcome of scholarly inquiry, investigation, or experimentation having as an objective the revision of existing concepts, the development of new concepts, or the development of new or improved techniques in some phase of soil science.

2. The *SSSA Journal* is the normal channel for the publication of papers reporting original research findings. Regular articles may be published as a rapid communication, without waiting their turn, if justified by the corresponding authors and approved by the technical editor committee. Short papers (normally less than two printed pages) may be submitted as Notes: these may be published as a rapid communication, without waiting their turn, if justified by the corresponding authors and approved by the technical editor committee. Papers and Notes may be submitted at any time for publication in the *SSSA Journal*, whether presented at the annual meetings or not.

3. Short papers (normally less than two printed pages in the journal) covering experimental techniques, apparatus, or observations, may be submitted as notes. Notes are not an outlet for papers which are found to be unacceptable as regular articles by the reviewers because of content or state of preparation; however, papers may qualify instead as notes on the basis of the description given above. Review procedures for notes are the same as for regular articles but obviously the criteria will differ. A manuscript submitted as a regular article which, in the opinion of the editor, fits instead the criteria of a note, will be reviewed as a note after consultation with the corresponding author. Notes will be published in the most appropriate division of *SSSA Journal* and not in a separate notes section.

4. Papers submitted to the *SSSA Journal* may be transferred to one of the other publications of the Soil Science Society of America, the American Society of Agronomy, or the Crop Science Society of America, provided the author requests the transfer or gives written permission for such transfer, provided the subject matter is appropriate for the publication to which the transfer is proposed, said appropriateness to be determined by the editor of the publication in question, and provided the manuscript meets editorial approval for publication in the outlet to which transfer is proposed. Where a transfer is made, the date of receipt is the date on which the paper was received by the editorial office to which it was submitted originally. Papers submitted originally for publication by one of the associated societies may be accepted for publication by the Soil Science Society of America under the same policy.

5. Manuscripts published in the technical journals of ASA, CSSA, and SSSA must be original reports not previously or simultaneously published in any other scientific or technical journal. The question of when publication in nontechnical outlets constitutes prior publication must be decided on a case-by-case basis. Recognizing that research scientists often have an obligation to report their findings in nontechnical media prior to publication in technical journals, publication in nontechnical outlets will not be considered prior publication unless essentially all the data and all the conclusions which have been drawn from the data are included in the nontechnical publication.

B. Reviews of Research

1. Short, critical reviews or essays on timely subjects, upon invitation by the technical editor committee, may be published in a special section of the *SSSA Journal*. This section shall not exceed 48 pages per year. Page and production charges for invited review papers are waived.

2. Extensive reviews of research may be published in the *Agronomy* monograph series (by ASA, CSSA, or SSSA), or in the SSSA book series. They may be appropriate for publication in the Soil Science Society of America Special Publication series, depending on the subject, but are not eligible for publication in the *SSSA Journal*. Such reviews usually are prepared only after consultation with the editor of the proposed publication outlet.

C. Monographs and SSSA Book Series

Reviews of research, and other manuscripts dealing extensively with a particular subject may be published as an *Agronomy* monograph by ASA, CSSA, or SSSA, or in the SSSA book series. Manuscripts of the nature of monographs on subjects that do not seem appropriate as an *Agronomy* monograph of SSSA book may be acceptable for publication in the Soil Science Society of America Special Publication series. Preparation of manuscripts for monographs or books is undertaken only after consultation with the chair of the Monographs or Book committee, or with the editor-in-chief.

D. Annual Addresses

Addresses by Society officers and by invitational speakers given at the annual general meeting are eligible for publication in the *SSSA Journal*. The manuscripts may be reviewed informally by the technical editor committee but shall require approval only with respect to form and style.

E. Invited Papers

1. The publication policy for invited papers given by Society members at annual meetings is as outlined in *A* and *B*.

2. Invited papers given at annual meetings by nonmembers of the Society who have no members as coauthors are not eligible for publication by the Society unless approval for eligibility is obtained from the president before the invitation is issued. Divisional chairs who wish to issue invitations for papers should obtain this approval through the president-elect, who is the general

program chair. The president may seek the advice of the technical editor committee in reaching a decision. Once approval for eligibility has been obtained, the manuscript is handled by the editorial board in accordance with the policy outlined in *A* and *B*. Page charges for such invited papers are waived. Approval for eligibility by the president applies only to publications of the Soil Science Society of America. If the subject matter of the proposed manuscript appears to fit better in one of the publications of the American Society of Agronomy, prior approval of that Society must be obtained as outlined above or in such other manner as may be specified by that Society. Where eligibility for publication is granted, the divisional chair should make clear to the participants that action by the president does not alter the authority and responsibility of the editorial board to judge the suitability of the manuscript for publication.

F. Symposia Published in SSSA Journal

Special publications are the Society's preferred medium for publishing symposia papers; however, it is recognized that under certain circumstances there is benefit to publishing such papers in the *SSSAJ*. Consequently, the following policy statement was developed relative to publication of symposium papers in the journal.

General Policy

The primary reason for publishing symposia in the *SSSAJ* is to report related advances in some aspect of soil science. Published symposia thus provide a coordinated series of mostly original contributions that either advance basic principles or demonstrate important applications of soil science. Except by special approval of the Technical Editors Committee, a single series of symposium papers shall not exceed 60 published pages in a given issue of the Journal.

Selection Guidelines

1. Overall originality of research will be the primary criterion governing the selection of symposium papers for publication in the *SSSAJ*. The collective impact of a series of papers as compared to single submissions will also be considered.

2. A symposium series may be introduced by a short, critical review or essay; however, a collection of articles dominated by reviews will not be accepted. In such instances, symposium organizers should consider the possibility of a special publication as a preferred medium for publication.

3. Symposia seeking a synthesis of knowledge through the efforts of two or more divisions of the SSSA or through collaboration with other scientific or professional societies are encouraged. Symposia combining national and international developments in soil science are also encouraged.

Procedure

1. The symposium organizing committee should submit 10 copies of a request for publication to the Editor of the *SSSAJ* at least six months in advance of the actual symposium. The request should include a statement of purpose, a summary of proposed content with the names of authors and approximate titles of papers, an evaluation of the expected impact of the published proceedings, and the names of possible guest editors. If appropriate, the initial request should also indicate any proposed dedication for the symposium.

2. The request will be evaluated in a timely manner by the Technical Editors Committee of the Editorial Board. The Committee may seek external advice before reaching a decision. If the request to publish is approved, the Committee will also select a guest editor(s) to assist with the review process.

3. Prior to the actual submission of symposium manuscripts to the Editor of the *SSSAJ*, the guest editor(s) must provide a final listing of titles and authors. Corresponding authors should

be identified and any waiver of publication costs for non-SSSA members should be verified. Page charges for the publication of papers written by members of the Tri-Societies will be the responsibility of member authors. Journal page charges for invited non-members can only be waived by the president, or the president-elect as the president's designee, of the society. It is the responsibility of the guest editor(s) to secure such waivers before an invitation is issued.

4. The guest editor(s) will initially screen all manuscripts from the symposium authors to ensure that manuscripts are in the proper *SSSAJ* format for double blind review [see "Suggestions to Contributors to *SSSAJ*;" *SSSAJ* 58:(4):i(1994)]. Additional information is available in the Publications Handbook and Style Manual.

5. Manuscripts must be submitted as a group to the *SSSAJ* Editor, normally within 60 days after the symposium is completed. The guest editor(s) shall forward four copies of each properly formatted manuscript to the *SSSAJ* Editor along with the name, address, and telephone/FAX numbers of the corresponding author. Recommendations regarding the most appropriate subject matter division for review purposes (S-1 to S-10) and suggestions for suitable reviewers may also be submitted by the guest editor(s).

6. The *SSSAJ* Editor will forward the collection of symposium papers to the proper Technical Editor. The Technical Editor will, in turn, distribute the manuscripts to appropriate Associate Editors who will handle the review process in a manner consistent with that used for non-symposium papers (except as noted in item 7).

7. Anonymous reviews and recommendations will be forwarded directly to the corresponding authors. The guest editor(s) will also receive copies of these comments from the Associate Editors or the Technical Editor of the Division handling the review. The guest editor(s) is encouraged to work with the authors to properly address all concerns identified in the peer review process and to facilitate timely revision of the manuscripts. Any manuscript not revised within four months of its return for revision is subject to release by the Technical Editor. Likewise, all decisions regarding final acceptance or release of manuscripts rest with the Editor and Technical Editor.

8. The guest editor(s) should prepare a preamble of up to one published page for the symposium series. This statement should emphasize the scientific relevance of the subject matter and the implications of reported advances. The statement should *not* be a simple summary of the symposium program. The preamble should be forwarded to the *SSSAJ* Editor with the initial group of manuscripts and may also be subjected to peer review.

9. Dedication of a symposium, up to one published page, may be made for an eminent scientist, group of scientists, or an organization if recommended by the Technical Editors Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. A scientist(s) honored by such a dedication should not be included as an author in the symposium series.

G. Papers in a Joint Program or Symposium with Another Organization

The policy is the same as that outlined in *E* with two exceptions. First, if the individual representing the Soil Science Society of America in arrangements with the other organization is not a divisional chair, this person shall discharge the responsibilities charged to the divisional chair in *E-2*. Second, agreement on publication procedures must be reached between the president of the Soil Science Society of America and the comparable official of the cooperating organization before invitations are issued.

H. Comments and Letters to the Editor

Critical comments on papers published in one of the Society outlets or elsewhere, editorial comment and comments by Society officers, and personal comments on matters having to do with soil science may be published in the *SSSA Journal*. Critical comments by nonmembers on papers published in one of the Society outlets are eligible for publication as are responses by nonmember authors of papers which are criticized in this department, subject to the approval of the manuscript for publication in this form by the technical editor committee. Only where intent of publication is clearly indicated by the author will personal comments be published. Contributions exceeding a length of one printed page in the *SSSA Journal* are generally not eligible for publication as a comment or letter to the editor. Page charges for comments and letters are waived.

I. Papers on the History of Soil Science

Papers on the history of soil science that are recommended by the SSSA Council on the History of Soil Science will be published in *SSSA Journal* if approved by the editorial board following peer review.

J. Society Affairs

Business affairs of the Society and other items of interest and concern to members are published in the *SSSA Journal*.

K. Editorials

Editorials and guest editorials may be published in the *SSSA Journal* as the need arises and at the discretion of the editor.