The end has come: A time for new beginnings

Colin G. Scanes, Editor-in-Chief

One of my great fortunes has been my years as editor-in-chief of Poultry Science: I will treasure this opportunity. During this time, I have read so many fine papers.

What changes have we seen in the journal during my tenure?

- The number of papers and pages published has continued to increase from 283 papers (2110 pages) in 2004 to 366 papers (2804 pages) in 2009.
- The quality of the journal is high, with Poultry Science being the highest ranked general poultry science journal in the Agriculture, Animal and Dairy Science category of Journal Citation Reports, published by Thomson Reuters, with a 2009 impact factor of 1.673. The journal is showing a trend toward more rejections.
- Time to publication (including peer review) continues to decline, from 242 d in 2004 to 215 d in 2009.
- The journal has become much more of an international journal with a great increase in submitted and published papers coming from outside North America (Scanes, 2010) and with section editors from Asia, Australia, and Europe.
- The journal is now clearly in the electronic age with papers available in both PDF and HTML formats online and more color figures in the online versions of the journal.

What are the challenges ahead?

- Publishing journals by scientific and other professional societies has been a major source of operating income. With the push toward open access (Scanes, 2008) these halcyon days may be numbered. Societies will need to re-examine their business models. I hope that I am wrong but it is reasonable to predict that we will see a loss of journals as libraries drop subscriptions and societies decide that a journal might be eliminated. It is also possible to predict the demise of some professional societies themselves. Parenthetically I note that many universities are converting libraries, or large parts of them, into collaborative learning spaces complete with cafés. I hope that today’s students gain the love of books and reading that was engendered in me as a student as I combed the stacks for books, papers, and reviews.
- We are increasingly detecting ethical problems with complete or extensive duplicate publication of data, self-plagiarism (Scanes, 2009), plagiarism, and scientific fraud. With the purchase of appropriate software for detecting plagiarism, the vigilance of reviewers, and cooperation with other journals, this can be greatly reduced. More needs to be done to raise the awareness of students and senior investigators as to what is permissible and what is not.
- We must constantly strive to be better than the competition.

To close this chapter, I state emphatically that it is my pleasure to thank the section editors, associate editors, and reviewers for their dedication and the superb job that they do. Susan Pollock and the technical editors continue to do a tremendous job, surpassing their achievements every year. My advice to reviewers follows William Shakespeare: “Love all, trust a few.” I thank the Poultry Science Association Board and the executive director for their wholehearted support over the years. We are indebted to the authors for their continuing submissions. I wish my successor, Tom Porter, good luck and hope that he enjoys the role as much as I have. I am confident that the journal is in good hands with such an eminent poultry scientist as editor-in-chief.

REFERENCES