

---

# Editorial

---

It is with some feeling of *déjà vu* as well as trepidation that I feel duty bound to return to the seemingly perpetual problem of the timeliness of – or rather the lack of – the appearance of your journal. Judged on that criterion alone 1999 would be what a politician might describe as a “difficult” year for the *WPSJ* and its Editor and, thus far, the year 2000 has been no better. The final number of last year did not reach your desks until this April, while the March number of the current year was not dispatched until July and the June issue has apparently yet to find its way to our mail room. I admit that this is simply not acceptable for a professional organisation and stand by the seriousness (expressed in the June 1999 editorial) with which I view the continuing failure to provide the journal during the month corresponding to the date on the cover. It is no consolation to have to tell you that copy for both the March and June issues left the Editor’s office a good 8 weeks before the ends of these respective months. As I write this on the 1st August all but this article and the summary translations for the September issue have been with the publishers for 10 days. I can only reassure you that I am trying very hard to identify any bottle necks and to eliminate these from the production processes. Despite my previous predictions being fairly wide of the mark, I’m brave (foolhardy) enough to hope that, by the last number of this year, the publication date will be on schedule.

It has been customary around this time of year for the Editor to produce to the Executive Committee some statistics on the journal volume just completed. Because these figures make rather better reading than the delivery dates of the journal, I thought I might pass these on to you through this column rather than have you wait to read them as part of the minutes of a meeting. Volume 55 was the third to appear since the publication frequency of the *WPSJ* reverted to four issues per year. It contained a total of 512 pages compared with the 490 in volume 54 and was therefore the fattest ever produced. Including covers, there were 64 (64) pages of advertisements, 54 (49) of which were paid for (the figures in parentheses refer to those pertaining to volume 54). If all part pages of the scientific reviews are counted as full pages and blank pages are ignored, the scientific and technical content of volume 55 was the most substantial of all time, occupying 317 (263) pages or 63% of the journal. As a proportion of the total volume, translations of the summaries occupied 7% (9%), Association and Branch affairs 6.0% (6.4%), the calendar 2.7% (2.5%), research news 0.8% (1.0%) and sponsors 1.6% (1.5%). The remainder consisted of the listing of contents, one letter and reply, editorials, notes for contributors and the annual index.

Using very loose definitions to categorise the subject matter of the 19 papers and four regional reports, nine were related to nutrition, five to health/disease, four to welfare/environment, two to meat quality and one each to food safety, genetics and physiology. The geographical locations of the authors of the papers were Western Europe 43.8%, Africa 22.5%, North America 15.2%, Asia 10.9%, Central/South America 5.4% and Eastern Europe 2.2%.

The move to processing the journal fully electronically continues to gather pace and, although I can understand if a few eyebrows are raised rather quizzically, makes a significant contribution to efficiency and reduces delays in the editing/publishing/printing processes. All authors who can are encouraged to submit an electronic version of their manuscripts.

**Jim McNab**