

Instructions to Authors: *Soil Science Society of America Journal*

General Requirements

Contributions to the *Soil Science Society of America Journal* (SSSAJ) may be:

1) REVIEW PAPER—A review is not simply a collection of papers that are all centered on a common theme. Review papers should provide a synthesis of existing knowledge and give new insights or concepts not previously presented in the literature, or at least not with the same level of detail. The review should identify knowledge gaps for future research. An author should generally be allowed more freedom to provide his/her view on a topic in a review as the papers being reviewed are presumed to already have passed some level of scientific scrutiny by peers. A good review is often one of the most important ways to advance an area of science. The review paper should be targeted to not more than 10 published pages. Ten pages is around 10,000 words, less about 250 words for each table or figure.

2) ISSUES PAPER—Soils issues papers include discussion of contemporary soils issues from a combination of scientific, political, legislative, and regulatory perspectives. These papers may often be more philosophical, but must still be based on a foundation of good science. The issue paper should be targeted to not more than 10 published pages.

3) ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE—Original research findings are interpreted to mean the outcome of scholarly inquiry, investigations, modeling, 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. Authors are encouraged to test modeling results with measurements or published data. Articles published in SSSAJ are expected to address important scientific questions in soil science and make a contribution to our understanding of the subject. Authors are encouraged to examine recent papers in SSSAJ as a guide to evaluate whether their work is of the same high quality, scientific rigor, scope, and complexity.

4) NOTE—Notes focus on studies of limited scope, unique observations, or research techniques and apparatus. The length of a note should be 2 to 3 published pages.

5) Comments and Letters to the Editor—contain (a) critical comments on papers published in one of the Society outlets, (b) editorial comments by Society officers, or (c) personal comments on matters having to do with soil science.

Contributions need not have been presented at annual meetings. Refer to the *Publications Handbook and Style Manual* at <https://dl.sciencesocieties.org/publications/style/> for additional information. The SSSAJ also invites submissions for cover illustrations from authors of manuscripts accepted for publication.

The SSSAJ uses a double blind review format. Authors are anonymous to reviewers and reviewers are anonymous to authors. The manuscript title but not the authors' names must appear on the abstract page. If included, the acknowledgment section must appear on the title page rather than preceding the references section (as in published papers), so it can be removed prior to review.

From time to time, authors' names are added or deleted

from a manuscript between the time of submission and publication. In situations such as this, the ethical and responsible manner of handling this type of change is for the lead author to advise the author being added or deleted of the change and to notify, in writing, the editor and managing editor of the journal.

Submitting Manuscripts

Manuscripts can be submitted to the SSSAJ Editor through ManuscriptCentral at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/sssaj>. Only electronic submissions are accepted, the preferred format is a single MSWord file containing all text and tables. Figures must be submitted in TIF, EPS, or PDF format. Photographs must be submitted in TIFF or JPEG format. The following information must be provided for each manuscript submitted: corresponding author with email address and other contact information; complete listing of all authors and affiliations; manuscript title; and a listing of all individuals acknowledged in the manuscript. Please note that because SSSAJ uses a double-blind review, author listings and acknowledgements should be put in the appropriate field upon submission. Additionally, authors are requested to specify an appropriate division for review.

All manuscripts are subject to plagiarize screenings upon submission. Prior publication is a violation of SSSAJ's policy.

ORCID iD. Beginning July 1, 2018, corresponding authors will be required to use an ORCID iD when submitting a manuscript. For more information on ORCID, see www.orcid.org. We encourage all authors to list their ORCID iD in the manuscript.

Choosing a Division for Your Research

Soil Science Society of America Journal uses Divisions to organize manuscripts into research disciplines and streamline the review process. Technical Editors have responsibility for handling papers for one or more Divisions in their discipline(s) of expertise. Potential authors who are not soil scientists may find this system confusing. Therefore, to facilitate the assignment of research manuscripts to the appropriate Division, the list below provides specific research topic areas handled in each Division. This list is not exhaustive, but was compiled by the Technical Editors to cover the vast majority of manuscripts handled in their Divisions. Please find the Division appropriate for the Research Topic Area appropriate to your manuscript and choose it on the ScholarOne submission pull down menu. If you choose to specify a Technical Editor, it would be helpful, if your research topic area falls under one of their Divisions. The names of the Technical Editors are provided after each Division name and number.

Research Topic Areas

Division S-1: Soil Physics, Dr. Julian Zhu
Soil water dynamics
Fate and transport of solutes in soil
Heat and energy fluxes
Soil physical properties
Anthropological activities and soil processes
Instruments and new techniques

Division S-2: Soil Chemistry, Dr. Sainji Parikh
Processes at the solid-solution interface
Oxidation-reduction

Research Topic Areas continued.

Chemical thermodynamics and kinetics

Aqueous and solid-phase speciation

Innovative chemical composition

Speciation characterization methodologies

Division S-3: Soil Biology and Biochemistry, Dr. William Horwath

Soil microbial communities

Metagenomics

Biogeochemistry

Division S-4: Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition, Dr. Nathan Slaton

Soil nutrient cycling and transformation

Soil and crop response to fertilization

Soil acidity and salinity management

Division S-5: Pedology, Craig Rasmussen

Soil landscape relationships

Soil genesis, weathering, morphology, hydrogeology, and classification

Quantitative pedology and digital mapping

Division S-6: Soil and Water Management and Conservation,

Dr. Shannon Osborne

Soil management

Soil conservation

Soil quality

Carbon sequestration

Erosion

Division S-7: Forest, Range and Wildland Soils, Dr. Will Horwath

Ecosystems and landscape ecology

Division S-8: Nutrient Management and Soil and Plant Analysis,

Dr. Nathan Slaton

Development and validation of soil and plant analysis methods

Correlation and calibration of nutrient availability indices

Manure/biosolid nutrient management and transformations

Nutrient management using fertilizer additives

Division S-9: Soil Mineralogy, Dr. Craig Rasmussen

Clay mineralogy

Mineral structure, weathering, and transformation

Mineral-environment interactions

Division S-10: Wetland soils, Dr. Craig Rasmussen

Wetland biogeochemistry

Wetland functions, delineation, and restoration

Wetland hydrology

Novelty and Impact Highlights:

As part of the submission process, authors must prepare highlights of their article. The highlights will consist of 3 to 5 bullet points with each point having a maximum of 85 characters (spaces included). The bullet points should convey the core findings of the article and emphasize the novel aspects and impacts of the research on scientific progress and environmental problem solving. The purpose of these highlights is to give a concise summary that will be helpful in assessing the suitability of the manuscript for publication in SSSAJ and for selecting appropriate reviewers. If the article is accepted, the highlights may also be used for promoting and publicizing the research.

Potential Reviewers

Authors are requested to provide a list of potential reviewers through ManuscriptCentral. Reviewers must not be subject to a conflict of interest involving the author(s) or manuscript. The SSSAJ editorial board is not obligated to use any reviewer suggested by the author(s).

Creating the Manuscript

Although manuscript review may be done using PDF files, Microsoft Word files are required for editing of all accepted manuscripts, and therefore authors are strongly advised to use this software during manuscript composition. Rich-text format (.rtf extension) and LaTeX files are not acceptable.

The file prior to typesetting is one that closely resembles a text-only file. Production editors must delete all unnecessary formatting in the manuscript file to prepare it for typesetting. Therefore, authors should avoid using word processing features such as automated bulleting and numbering, footnoting, head and subhead formatting, internal linking, or styles. Avoid using more than one font and font size. Limited use of italics, bold, superscripts, and subscripts is acceptable. Please use the built-in MSWord features rather than inserting formatted characters in a separate text box. All paragraphs (including references) should be double-spaced and line-numbered, with at least 2.5-cm margins.

Title Page (optional). The title page should include:

1. A title not exceeding 12 words. The title should accurately identify and describe the manuscript content.
2. Author-paper documentation. Include author name(s), sponsoring organization(s), and complete address(es). Identify the corresponding author with an asterisk (*). Do not list professional titles. Other information such as funding source(s) may be included here or placed in an acknowledgment, also on the title page. To ensure an unbiased review, the title page will be deleted prior to the review process.
3. The corresponding author's phone and fax numbers and email address. An email address is essential for manuscript processing with ManuscriptCentral.
4. The acknowledgements section, if any.

Abstract. An informative, self-explanatory abstract, not exceeding 250 words (150 words for notes), must be supplied on a separate page. It should describe specifically why and how the study was conducted, what the results were, and why they are important. Use quantitative terms. Formatting must be as a single paragraph. References cannot be cited. The title (without author identification) must precede the abstract. A list of any abbreviations used in the text should follow the abstract, alphabetized according to abbreviation.

Tables¹. Each table must be submitted on a separate page and must be numbered consecutively. Do not duplicate matter that is presented in charts or graphs. Use the following symbols for footnotes in the order shown: †, ‡, §, ¶, #, ††, ‡‡, etc.

The symbols *, **, and *** are always used to show statistical significance at the 0.05, 0.01, and 0.001 level, respectively, and are not used for other footnotes. Spell out abbreviations on first mention in tables, even if the abbreviation is defined in the text (i.e., a reader should be able to interpret each table without referring to the text).

Figures¹. Each figure must be submitted on a separate page with caption. In addition, a list of the figure captions at the end of the file should be included. Do not use figures that duplicate matter in tables. When creating figures, use font sizes and line weights that will reproduce clearly

¹ Tables and figures (review quality) with captions should be placed into the text document at first mention. Figures must also be submitted separately as high-resolution image files in the following acceptable formats: EPS, TIF, PDF, or JPEG.

and accurately when figures are sized to the appropriate column width. Screening and/or shaded patterns often do not reproduce well; whenever possible, use black lines on a white background in place of shaded patterns. Color figures are acceptable and are the default of the electronic version. The data in the figure must be accurately represented in a grayscale version. For example, use symbols not just the differing line thickness to differentiate between data. Figures and captions should stand alone. Captions should explain the data rather than discuss the results of the data.

Authors should try to supply image files that can be reduced to a one-column width (8.5 cm or 20 picas). Lettering or numbers in the printed figure should not be smaller than the type size in the body of an article as printed in the journal (8-point type) or larger than the size of the main subheads (12-point type). The minimum type size is 6-point type. As an example, a 17-cm-wide figure should have 16-point type, so that when the figure is reduced to a single column, the type is reduced to 8-point type. The minimum line weight is ½ point (thinner lines will not reproduce well).

As with tables, spell out abbreviations on first mention in figure captions, even if they have already been defined in the text.

References. Note the following in preparing the references section:

1. Format the references with double-spacing and line-numbering.
2. Do not number the references listed.
3. Arrange the list alphabetically by last name of the senior author and then by last name of successive authors.
4. Single-authored articles should precede multiple-authored articles for which the same individual is senior author.
5. Two or more articles by the same author(s) are listed chronologically; two or more in the same year are indicated by the letters a, b, c, etc.
6. All published works cited in the text must be listed as a reference and vice versa.
7. Only literature that is available through libraries can be cited. The reference list can include theses, dissertations, abstracts, or web (URL) listings.
8. Material not available through libraries, such as personal communications or privileged data, should be cited in the text in parenthetical form.
9. Chapter references from books must include, in order, author(s), year, chapter title, editor(s), book title, publisher, city, and page range.
10. Symposium proceedings should include editor(s), date and place of symposium, publisher, publisher's location, and page numbers.
11. Software references should include the following information: Author (or company). date. Name of Software. Version (if applicable). Manufacturer, location. For example, SAS Institute. 1994. The SAS system for Windows. Release 6.10. SAS Inst., Cary, NC.

Publishing Supplemental Information

Supplemental material may be included in the online version of articles. The material is accessible from the issue Table of contents and article-level pages. Authors are encouraged to submit materials that contribute to the content and quality of the article, or to use supplemental material

as a means to shorten the text of manuscripts. Ancillary information such as some experimental data, including schematics of apparatus and maps of study sites, or material of interest mainly to specialists, are examples of potential supplemental material. When using supplemental material to shorten the text of a manuscript, keep in mind that the Materials and Methods section should provide enough detail to allow the reader to determine whether the interpretations are supported by the data.

Supplemental material must undergo peer review and should be submitted along with the original manuscript. Supplemental datasets will not be peer reviewed. A one- or two-sentence description of the supplemental material should be included in the main manuscript right after the acknowledgment.

Supplemental tables and figures should be cited in order in the main manuscript. Supplemental material should be formatted with a cover sheet listing authors and manuscript title, and the number of pages, figures, and tables. Tables and figures should be numbered Supplemental Table or Supplemental Figure S1, S2, etc.

Ideally, the supplement should consist of a single PDF or MS Word file (rather than a series of files with individual images or structures); however, most file types are allowed, including video, spreadsheets, and PowerPoint files. To keep file size down, please compress the files if possible. The following are not allowed: executables (.exe) of any kind or TeX.

Style Guidelines

All soils discussed in the manuscript should be identified according to the U.S. soil taxonomic system at first mention. The Latin binomial or trinomial and authority must be shown for all plants, insects, pathogens, microorganisms and animals when first mentioned. Both the accepted common name and the chemical name of any chemicals mentioned (including pesticides) must be provided. SI units must be used throughout the manuscript. Corresponding metric or English units may be added in parentheses at the discretion of the author. If a commercially available product is mentioned, the name of the manufacturer should be included in parentheses after first mention.

Official Sources

1. Spelling: *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*
2. Official Soil Series descriptions site from USDA–NRCS (<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/classification/osd/index.html>).
3. Scientific names of plants: *A Checklist of Names for 3000 vascular plants of Economic Importance* (USDA Agric. Handb. 505, see also the USDA Germplasm Resources Information Network database at: <http://www.ars-grin.gov/npgs/searchgrin.html>).
4. Chemical names of pesticides: *Farm Chemicals Handbook* (Meister Publishing, revised yearly)
5. Fungal nomenclature: *Fungi on Plants and Plant Products in the United States* (APS Press)
6. Journal abbreviations: *Chemical Abstracts Service Source Index* (American Chemical Society, revised yearly)
7. *The Glossary of Soil Science Terms* is available both in hard copy (SSSA, 2008) and on the SSSA Web page (<https://www.soils.org/publications/soils-glossary>). It contains

definitions of more than 1800 terms, a procedural guide for tillage terminology, an outline of the U.S. soil classification system, and the designations for soil horizons and layers.

Resubmitted Papers

A resubmitted paper is one identified by the corresponding author or Technical Editor, as having been submitted previously to the SSSAJ, reviewed, and released. These papers retain the same topical focus as the original version, but the presentation often reflects substantial revision, and they are treated as new submissions for the review process. Resubmitted papers must be accompanied by a file containing responses to previous review comments. The file is for editorial use only, unless author approval has been obtained for access by reviewers.

Manuscript Revisions

Authors have one month to make revisions and return their manuscript following receipt of reviewer and associate editor comments. If not returned within one month, the manuscript will be released unless an extension has been arranged with the associate editor. To receive further consideration for publication, it must be resubmitted to the Editor as a new manuscript.

Publication Charges and Manuscript Length

Membership in the Society is not a requirement for publication in the SSSAJ; however, nonmembers will be charged a higher fee than members. An article with page length 0-7 pages is assessed no charges. Each page after 7 pages will be assessed \$100 for members. Nonmembers will pay \$200 per page after 7 pages. To qualify for the member rate, an author must be an active, emeritus, graduate student, or undergraduate student member of SSSA on the date the manuscript is accepted for publication. The aforementioned publication fee will be waived for invited review papers, and will not be assessed for Comments, Letters to the Editor, or book reviews.

If the manuscript is prepared with a word processor using a 12-point proportional font, 1000 words will be approximately equivalent to one printed page of the SSSAJ. Each table and figure will typically occupy $\frac{1}{4}$ of a printed page. For tabular matter, 10 lines of headings, subheadings, and/or data rows require 1 inch of column space. Tables with up to 60 characters per row (including spaces between characters) can usually be printed in a single column, while tables that exceed this width will require two columns. The height of a printed figure will be in the same proportion to the width (1 column = 8.5 cm; 2 column = 17.2 cm) as that of the corresponding dimensions in the original drawing.

The online version of SSSAJ will default to color figures if supplied. The figures must accurately represent the data in the color version as well as in grayscale.

Open Access Options

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Manuscript Reviews

Up to three months may be required for the initial review. Please check the respective manuscript record in ManuscriptCentral to track the progress of your manuscript. Thereafter, authors may contact the Editor to obtain information about the progress of the review.

Policy for Appeal of Manuscript Review

The Tri-Societies as a scientific publisher must make judgments about the correctness and relevance of manuscripts under consideration for publication. The Societies rely on qualified volunteers to review manuscripts and to serve on editorial boards to make these editorial decisions and to provide feedback to authors. In the vast majority of cases, this process works smoothly.

Should an author feel that the process was implemented incorrectly or that a review was biased, or poorly done, the author should first inform the Editor of that journal, and attempt to resolve the concern at that level. If the concern is not resolved, the author may appeal the decision to the Editors-in-Chief. Their decision will be final.

All volunteers involved in evaluating a manuscript will be assumed to have acted in an appropriate and professional manner unless and until it is demonstrated to be otherwise. The Societies' volunteers will keep all those involved in an appeal informed of the process, and will always be cognizant that such investigations are difficult for all concerned, and will use their best judgment regarding tact and confidentiality.

Adopted by Editors-in-Chief, September 2011.

Accepted Manuscripts

Following notification of manuscript acceptance, both a pdf and word processing file of the final accepted manuscript are required. The pdf and word processing file must match exactly in all parts of the manuscript. Files for tables and figures must also be included. Figure files will reproduce best if a tiff format is supplied for the figures. If you are having problems creating tiff files of the figures, please contact the managing editor.

Questions?

Send your questions to Rebecca Funck, Managing Editor, SSSAJ (rfunck@soils.org).