Publications

ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Launch New Journal

Agricultural & Environmental Letters Features
Open Access, Expedited Publication

Agricultural & Environmental Letters (AEL), a new digital journal, will officially launch 1 September, with the website and editorial board ready to receive manuscripts prior to that date. The new journal adds to a current portfolio of highly successful journals published by ASA, CSSA, and SSSA.

Agricultural & Environmental Letters will be an open access journal that publishes broad-reaching, exceptionally interesting, transformative, and timely research on major scientific, policy, and economic issues that span the entire range of the agricultural and environmental sciences. Rapid global communication is becoming more important, and AEL has been created to facilitate this communication.

Agricultural & Environmental Letters will bring together both researchers and policymakers to report the most accomplished and notable advances in the field. The types of manuscripts to be considered for publication include:

- Innovative results and observations with broad implications at the forefront of one or several agricultural and environmental disciplines.
- Results with immediate impact on the research of others and requiring rapid publication, especially if presented as part of Society conferences and symposia.
- Methods manuscripts introducing innovative techniques, with immediate applications to agricultural disciplines.

The new journal will have an expedited review and publication process by limiting manuscript size. Papers will be short—generally 2,500 words or fewer, including tables and figures. They should have broad and immediate implications in their discipline and/or across agricultural and environmental communities. Agricultural & Environmental Letters will be continuously published online. As a new article is made available, it is posted to the journal’s website and an email is sent to the readers who have registered for e-alerts.

“Agricultural & Environmental Letters is to be a place where conversations can develop among agricultural and environmental scientists concerning relevant issues related to science, policy, research trends, business trends, exciting new discoveries, food security, etc.” says the journal’s Editor, Warren Dick of The Ohio State University. “Science and technology are more integrated and interdisciplinary than ever before. This new journal will publish the broadest possible array of outstanding content in disciplines that touch on the agricultural and environmental sciences.”

Facilitating Conversation

To stimulate this conversation, and to attract a wide readership, the journal will make liberal use of guest editorials and will also include a commentary section. This section will be a place where agricultural and environmental scientists can further stimulate conversation. Letters to the editor will also be greatly encouraged.

Feature articles will have a summary section (i.e., abstract of 150 words maximum) for abstracting services and others to use. Also required will be three to five core ideas or highlight statements with 80 characters maximum for each, a backgrounds section, procedures, results, discussion, and references, with tables and figures optional. An article published in AEL will not preclude publication by the author of more detailed, full-length article in another ACSESS journal, provided there is enough change to warrant a separate publication.

Manuscripts describing cross-disciplinary research or addressing emerging issues are of particular interest. The journal will be attractive to both scientific and professional audiences (CCAs, CPSS’s, etc.).

Accelerated Review

Time is of the essence; therefore all steps in the review process will have accelerated targets for completion. It is expected that the total time between author submission and first posting online will be a little as 40 days. This will allow authors to rapidly acquire citable publications as an early record of the completion of a scholarly effort. Agricultural &

Soybean harvest photo courtesy of iStock/SergioZacchi
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Warren Dick, Editor of Agricultural & Environmental Letters

Environmental Letters will aggressively pursue acceptance by highly recognized abstracting and citation services, including the creation of an impact factor.

Initially, eight technical editors have been appointed to serve on the editorial board. These technical editors all have outstanding scientific credentials and will be responsible for maintaining scientific and public trust. Technical editors will handle the review of manuscripts in certain discipline areas: soils (Jerry Hatfield and Tom DeSutter), crops (Mike Richardson and Kim Garland-Campbell), agronomy (Dan Sweeney and Hailin Zhang), and the environment (Peter Kleinman and Sharon Papiernik).

The journal will be financed solely by author fees of $975 per feature article, and articles will be published under the Creative Commons license CC-BY NC ND. \(^1\) Commentaries and letters to the editor will be published at a reduced rate based on article length. For the first six months (September 2015 through February 2016), manuscripts accepted for publication will be published at no cost to the authors. For the next six months, author fees will be discounted to $500. Special pricing options will be available for manuscripts submitted as part of ACSESS-sponsored conferences and meetings. Authors will be given explicit permission to publish the final article in their institutional repository. See AEL’s home page (https://dl.sciencesocieties.org/publications/ael) for updates.

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\(^1\) ACSESS is the Alliance of Crop, Soil, Environmental, and Soil Science Societies. It provides management and administrative support services to ASA, CSSA, and SSSA.

\(^2\) Any further publication of articles will require proper attribution; no derivative works may be made from articles; and articles may not be used for any commercial gain.