LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Still More on Metric Units

We agree with the objections stated by Koehler and Moodie relative to the requirement that metric units be used in the Agronomy Journal, Crop Science, and SSSA Proceedings, and support their recommendation that this policy be revised. (“Society Policy on Obligatory Use of Metric Units Question,” Sept.–Oct. 1967 SSSA Proceedings, p. 712).

The exclusive use of the metric system in reporting data makes no contribution to the quality or fundamental importance of the research but does seriously impair the understanding and comprehension of the results by a large and important segment of readers of these journals.

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I heartily agree with Koehler and Moodie when they complain about the society’s policy on use of metric units. I was very much interested in the article by Young et al. which they cited. It took twice the usual time to read because I had to convert to meaningful English units.

At the 1967 annual meetings (ASA, SSSA, CSSA) in Washington, D.C., most speakers used the metric units but the strain was evident. I was especially aware of the problem on Monday afternoon, Nov. 6 when Dr. Frank Viets presented a paper to Div. S-8 entitled “The Basis for Making Fertilizer Recommendations—The Current Status.” Dr. Viets had used both metric and English units in preparing his slides. Two or three times during his presentation, Dr. Viets erroneously interchanged units.

I think that our society moved too fast in this matter. As I recall the membership was not given a chance to vote on this matter. I too urge a review of the present policy that makes use of the metric unit obligatory.

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I agree with Koehler and Moodie in their remarks on Society policy on obligatory use of metric units. I would hope that a change in policy might be made rather quickly.

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