Both chemical engineers and soil scientists are concerned with solids, liquids, and gases, with their physical, mechanical, hydrodynamic and hydrostatic interactions, with diffusion, chemical reaction, evaporation, adsorption, leaching, and heat transference. The time seems to be ripe for some closer links to be forged—perhaps a joint conference?

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References

More Support for Metric Units

For many years I have favored adoption of metric units in the United States, both in science and in industry. Thus, I heartily approve the action taken by the SSSA Editorial Board at Columbus in 1965, approved by the SSSA Board of Directors at the same time and later adopted by the Agronomy Journal, making use of the metric system mandatory in all society papers published after January 1, 1967.

Advantages of using a uniform system throughout the world are obvious, so I hope that the negative reaction expressed by several of my colleagues in “Letters to the Editor” in recent issues of the SSSA Proceedings represent a minority of our members rather than a majority.

In defense of the new requirement, I would suggest that all members of our society read the report of the Royal Society (London) Conference of Editors, entitled “Metrication in Scientific Journals” which was reprinted on pages 159-164 in the Summer, 1968 (Vol. 56, no. 2) issue of American Scientist.

I would also refer to an item that appeared on page 1 of the May 23, 1968, issue of the Wall Street Journal, entitled “Metric Conversion Slowly Gains Support From Government and Industry.”

“I am amazed and somewhat distressed at the published letters against the full use of the metric system in reporting data in scientific journals.

Traditionally the metric system has been used for a long time in presenting part of the data, especially many of those from the laboratory. The policy to extend the practice to all data is a great forward step. “Bushels per acre” is especially difficult for many of our readers. All scientists can clearly understand kilos or metric tons per hectare.

Our journal is used primarily for scientific or highly technical papers to be read by scientists either in the United States or overseas. For laymen the papers must be rewritten anyway. In these papers for laymen, both concepts and data must be put into the terms used by them in communication.

In a scientific journal our principal purpose is to communicate as clearly and briefly as possible to a large scientific audience that reads papers from many countries and that is already fully familiar with the metric system.

The authors converting inches, pounds, and the like to their metric equivalent should be warned against the saving of small fractions that give an obviously false impression of accuracy.

Charles E. Kellogg
Deputy Administrator for Soil Survey
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