SSSA members submitting manuscripts for publication in the SSSA Proceedings are occasionally critical of the time required to have the manuscript accepted (or rejected). A few years ago the editorial board discussed methods of speeding up the review process. Specific information on the time used by reviewers was lacking. Little was known on how much decrease in review time might reasonably be expected. The purpose of this communication is to report my experience with reviewers and authors as an Associate Editor for 6 years during which time 87 manuscripts were processed.

The dates manuscripts were mailed to and received from reviewers were recorded. Similarly, dates that manuscripts and reviewer comments were mailed to authors and revised manuscripts returned were noted. The percentages of the total reviews or total revisions accomplished over a given 5-day time period for the first 105 days and on a given day beyond 105 days are shown in Fig. 1. Note that the time period includes mail travel in two directions and typing time for both review and revision. The actual time spent by the reviewer or author is less than indicated. The reviews were generally accomplished more rapidly than the revisions. Extremely long delays in accomplishing the task is much more common for revision than review. (Incidentally, the longest time for review was a case when the reviewer was on leave and there was considerable delay in getting the manuscript to him). The review percentages are calculated on the total number of individual reviews except for a few when dates were not recorded. The revision percentages are calculated on the total number of manuscripts returned to the authors for revision and returned. Those manuscripts not used in the calculations were two never returned by the authors, those accepted without revision, and those returned to the Editor-in-Chief.

The means and medians for various review activities are presented in Table 1. The total time represents the number of days between the dates of receipt and acceptance. These dates are published with each paper. The individual review and revision data are a summary of the information in Fig. 1. The average time for manuscript review is not equal to the average time taken by individual reviewers, because the manuscript review is dependent upon the slowest reviewer of the manuscript. The means and medians were calculated separately for manuscripts accepted and not accepted. The "difference" represents (i) time for the Editor-in-Chief to prepare and mail the manuscript to the Associate Editor, (ii) time for the Associate Editor to review the manuscript quickly and decide upon appropriate reviewers and then prepare mailing to the reviewers, (iii) time for the Associate Editor to study the review comments plus his own evaluation of the manuscript and prepare recommendations for the author and have them typed and (iv) time for the Associate Editor to examine the revised manuscript and make a decision on acceptance. The "difference" column also includes time used in sending manuscripts to reviewers who are unable to accept the assignment (a seldom occurrence).

I conclude that the reviewers are providing conscientious service to the Society. The average reviewer took 27 days (24-day median) and this includes time for mail to travel in two directions and a typist to prepare the review comments. These results represent the work of 81 different individuals who served as reviewers on one or more manuscripts.

The largest amount of time between receipt and acceptance is being used in revision (approximately 50%). I conclude that probably very little can be done to decrease the