

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, 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 will often have more of a philosophical bent to them, but must still be based on a foundation of good science. The issue paper should be targeted, 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.
- 4) NOTE—Notes focus on studies of limited scope, preliminary data, 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. The SSSAJ also invites submissions for cover illustrations from authors of manuscripts accepted for publication. Refer to SSSA Publication Policy [Soil Sci. Soc. Am. J. 70(1):308-310, 2006] and to the *Publications Handbook and Style Manual* (ASA-CSSA-SSSA, 2004) at <https://www.soils.org/publications/style/> for additional information.

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 ManuscriptTracker at <http://www.manuscripttracker.com/ver2/default.asp?journal=sssaj>. Only electronic submissions are accepted, in the form of a single PDF file containing all text, tables, and figures. To avoid font substitution errors that will delay processing, use of Microsoft Word is strongly recommended in preference to other word processing software. PDF conversion may be accomplished through ManuscriptTracker. The following information must be provided for each manuscript submitted: corresponding author with e-mail address and other contact information; complete listing of all authors; manuscript title; and a listing of all individuals acknowledged in the manuscript. Additionally, authors are strongly encouraged to specify an appropriate division for review. Instructions on various aspects of ManuscriptTracker are available at <http://www.manuscripttracker.com/ver2/helpauthor.asp?journal=sssaj&mode=author>.

Potential Reviewers

Authors are required to provide a list of potential reviewers through ManuscriptTracker. 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 is done using printed copies or PDF files, Microsoft Word files are required for on-screen editing of all accepted manuscripts, and therefore authors are strongly advised to use this software during manuscript composition. The use of WordPerfect is not recommended for electronic manuscript preparation because font substitution errors are apt to occur upon PDF conversion that will delay manuscript review. Rich-text format (.rtf extension) and T_EX files are not acceptable.

The file that is sent for typesetting 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. 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 e-mail address. An e-mail address is essential for manuscript processing with ManuscriptTracker.
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. Do not include a list of key words.

Tables. 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).

Figures. Do not use figures that duplicate matter in tables. When creating figures, use font sizes and line weights that will reproduce clearly 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, but will be subject to a publication surcharge if the manuscript is accepted.

Authors should try to supply photographs and drawings 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 or article title, page range, editor(s), book title, publisher, and city.
10. Symposium proceedings should include editor(s), date and place of symposium, publisher, publisher's location, and page numbers.

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 and location of the manufacturer should be

included in parentheses after first mention.

Official Sources

1. Spelling: Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary*
2. Amendments to the U.S. system of soil taxonomy (Soil Survey Staff, 1975) have been issued in the *National Soil Survey Handbook* (USDA-NRCS, 2007, <http://soils.usda.gov/technical/handbook/>) and in *Keys to Soil Taxonomy* (Soil Survey Staff, 2006; http://soils.usda.gov/technical/classification/tax_keys/).
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. Soil series names: *Soil Series of the United States, Including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands* (<http://ortho.ftw.nrcs.usda.gov/osd/osd.html>).
6. Fungal nomenclature: *Fungi on Plants and Plant Products in the United States* (APS Press)
7. Journal abbreviations: *Chemical Abstracts Service Source Index* (American Chemical Society, revised yearly)
8. *The Glossary of Soil Science Terms* is available both in hard copy (SSSA, 2008) and on the SSSA Web page (<https://www.soils.org/sssagloss/>) 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 list of responses to previous review comments. The list is for editorial use only, unless author approval has been obtained for access by reviewers.

Manuscript Revisions

Authors have three months to make revisions and return their manuscript following receipt of reviewer and associate editor comments. If not returned within three months, the manuscript will be released. 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. A per page charge of \$80 will be assessed to papers. Nonmembers will pay an additional \$100. To qualify for the member rate, the corresponding 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 may be waived for invited review papers, and will not be assessed for Comments and 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. For economy of space, some sections are set in small type, including Materials and Methods, Theory, tables, figure captions, and References. Each table and figure will typically occupy ¼ 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.

Authors can publish color photos, figures, or maps at their own expense. Please contact the Managing Editor (608-268-4969) for pricing information.

Manuscript Reviews

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

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.

Send files as email attachments to the managing editor, Rebecca Funck (rfunck@agronomy.org).

Questions?

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