

Editorial

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Editor

Agricultural and Food Science starts its 16th volume with this issue of seven volunteered papers. In our journal it is the first issue ever in which majority of the papers is written by authors from outside Finland, the country of origin of this journal. In this issue, the papers are from Croatia, Estonia, Poland and Portugal, one from each, and three from Finland. The geographical distribution of papers published reflects the development in the submitted manuscripts, which increasingly come from countries other than Finland and even outside the Baltic region. After becoming fully electronic and available through the online service of Ingenta (www.ingentaconnect.com) in 2004, the number of submissions has increased steadily and reached 139 in 2006 (116 in 2005, 94 in 2004), the increase being predominantly from abroad. Some of the readers may wonder how this distribution of published papers agrees with “publication of papers of international interest but featuring a northern perspective”, as stated in the Instructions to authors (www.mtt.fi/afs/about.html and www.mtt.fi/afs/instructions.html). According to our consideration, the “northern perspective” does not necessarily mean that the research has been carried out in boreal or temperate environments. However, the contents of the papers must have some applicability to the boreal environment. Often those papers introduce some new research methodology, or test agricultural practices, foods or feeding stuffs used also in the nordic areas, or present phenomena which are relevant in the nordic areas as well. This may be the best clarification available for authors about the meaning of the “nordic perspective”.

In 2006, *Agricultural and Food Science* had 122 experts reviewing the manuscripts. Their geographic distribution was as follows: Finland 22, other Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Estonia) 38, the rest of Europe 38, USA, Canada and Mexico 22, and Oceania 1. The journal wants to thank all the referees, listed at the end of the previous issue. Without their generous help and devotion, production of a quality scientific journal would be impossible.

Last year *Agricultural and Food Science* published 30 papers. Our journal, like many other rather small journals, is hampered by a low impact factor, fluctuating from year to year. According to the Journal Citation Reports, the impact factor of our journal was 0.255 for 2005, ranging in previous years up to 0.519. At this point, the impact factor for 2006 is not yet available. The impact factor for 2005 was calculated on the basis of those 13 citations made in 2005 to papers published in our journal in 2003 and 2004. A more comprehensive analysis of the citation report revealed that in 2005 there were, however, altogether as many as 160 citations to the papers published in *Agricultural and Food Science*. Mostly, they had been published in years 1998–2001, a period not used in the calculation of the recent impact factor. Agricultural sciences, often based on field experiments, do have a slower pace of publishing than some other sciences more keen on emphasising the impact factor as the principal index of a journal. Therefore, most manuscripts that will refer to the very recent papers of our journal, are still under preparation or in the review process. Moreover, the abstracts, freely available in the Ingenta online service, were read 3300 times in January through November 2006. Taking this into account, we think that our papers are well read and used as references at a reasonable level. The fact that citations are made to papers published to slightly older volumes (cited half-life 5.9 years), on the contrary, shows that those papers have had permanent value over the years.

I wish all the readers interesting moments with our journal.