

Chapter 5. Journal Histories and Management

One of the first functions of each of the three societies after it was formed was to begin publishing a scientific journal. In later years, more journals were added to the list, published by one or more of the Societies.

Currently ASA and SSSA publish two journals on their own, and CSSA publishes three journals on its own. The three societies cooperatively publish one additional journal.

This chapter presents an overview of the history and management of those journals.

AGRONOMY JOURNAL

Agronomy Journal first appeared in 1910, just 3 years after the ASA was founded. The first four volumes were titled *Proceedings of the American Society of Agronomy*. (Volume 1 contained papers from 1907, 1908, and 1909.) From 1913 through 1948 the name was *Journal of the American Society of Agronomy*. In 1949 the name was changed to *Agronomy Journal*. Published first in annual bound volumes and later at greater frequency, the journal appeared from 1923 through 1960 as a monthly periodical. Since then it has been published bimonthly in a paper edition, and since the first issue in 1998 that paper edition has also been published electronically on the internet. With the demise of *Journal of Production Agriculture* at the end of 1999, the scope of *Agronomy Journal* was expanded to allow publishing of papers that previously appeared in JPA.

The editorial board consists of the ASA Editor-in-Chief; an editor; technical editors in crops, soils, agroclimatology and agronomic models, and production agriculture; a number of associate editors covering numerous subject-matter areas of the agronomic, crop, and soil sciences; a managing editor; the publications director; the chief executive officer; and the Headquarters production editor who works on the journal.

Any paper published in the journal must make a significant contribution to the advancement of knowledge or toward a better understanding of existing agronomic concepts. *Agronomy Journal* publishes peer-reviewed articles reporting original research findings and technological information on all aspects of agriculture and natural resource sciences. It encourages submission of manuscripts that enhance application, transfer, and synthesis of information on agriculture and natural resources. These would include articles that transfer production-oriented information to a wide range of professional agriculturalists, including other disciplines such as animal science, weed science, agricultural economics, entomology, plant pathology, horticulture, and forestry.

“Notes and Unique Phenomena” may be published regarding apparatus, observations, and experimental techniques. Observations usually are limited to studies and reports of unrepeatable phenomena or other unique circumstances. “Review and Interpretation” papers may be published upon acceptance through the review process. Contribu-

tions to the “Forum” and “Contemporary Issues” sections deal with current agricultural and natural resource issues and questions in brief, thought-provoking form. Such papers are reviewed by the editor in consultation with the editorial board. Additionally computer programs are published in *Agronomy Journal*.

Editorial Responsibilities

Editor. The editor is responsible for overall quality of the intellectual content of the journal. As chair of the editorial board, the editor implements policy decisions of the ASA Board of Directors on editorial matters. The editor decides on procedures for manuscript submission, review and referee criteria, acceptance, release, and publication. The editor delegates editorial functions to other members of the editorial board, and advises on administrative functions of the managing editor.

The Editor oversees the electronic submission and review system via the online manuscript tracking program.

One of most important and critical functions of the editor is the selection of members to serve on the editorial board. The editor lives or dies by the people that are chosen. The editor, after consultation with the ASA Editor-in-Chief and on behalf of the ASA President, appoints new and replacement associate editors.

The editor takes an active part in defining the journal’s aims, policies, and editorial coverage. The editor examines the scope of the journal regularly and, with advice of the editorial board, can recommend that the scope be changed. The editor, by broad knowledge of the field, recommends the mix of specialties to be represented on the editorial board. The editor operates an appeal procedure for authors whose manuscripts are rejected. The editor may write editorials or solicit manuscripts on special topics. Letters to the editor are approved by the editor, but the editor seeks advice of the editorial board and others as needed.

The editor prepares an annual report for the Society describing the journal status and recommendations for changes and prepares the minutes of the annual board meeting published each year.

Technical Editors. Technical editors are appointed by the ASA Editor-in-Chief on behalf of the ASA President and after consultation with the editor. New technical editor positions may not be created without the approval of the ASA Board of Directors.

Under the direction of the editor, technical editors are responsible for the technical and intellectual content of the journal in their assigned areas. They oversee the work of assigned associate editors in reviewing and evaluating the worthiness of manuscripts submitted to the journal. They may assign manuscripts to the associate editor for statistics as appropriate or seek guidance from this associate editor on proper use of statistics.

The technical editors use the electronic submission and review system available on the internet. Technical editors delegate to associate editors the responsibility for obtaining additional reviews from qualified peer scientists. Technical editors, however, maintain the overall responsibility for determining that in-depth and timely reviews are obtained from knowledgeable scientists. When revisions of manuscripts are needed, technical editors normally delegate to associate editors the responsibility of corresponding and working with authors. Associate editors do not have the authority to accept or reject manuscripts. Instead, associate editors recommend the disposition of manuscripts to the technical editor, who is free to accept, modify, or disagree with that recommendation.

Technical editors notify authors when manuscripts are found to be worthy or unworthy of publication and inform the editor and managing editor.

Technical editors also are responsible for taking an active interest in assisting the editor to define the journal’s aims, policies, editorial coverage, and in recruiting members for the editorial board.

Associate Editors. Under the direction of a technical editor, associate editors are responsible for evaluating in a timely manner the technical and intellectual content and

suitability of manuscripts assigned to them. Associate editors seek the services of qualified peer reviewers and use the electronic submission and review system available on the internet. Technical editors usually delegate to associate editors the responsibility of corresponding and working with authors to obtain revisions as needed.

Associate editors make a recommendation to the technical editor about a course of action regarding the disposition of assigned manuscripts, but do not approve or disapprove manuscripts and should not convey to the author the impression that the manuscript will be approved or released. When associate editors recommend that manuscripts be released, they should give sufficient reason to the technical editor so the author can be fully informed. Associate editors are also responsible in assisting the editor in defining the journal's aims, policies, editorial coverage, and in recruiting members for the editorial board.

Managing Editor. The managing editor of *Agronomy Journal* is assigned by the publications director. The managing editor supervises copy editing of papers approved for publication, typesetting, transmittal of proofs to authors, makeup of pages for printing, and reprints of articles. The managing editor, together with the publications director, makes contract arrangements for production of the journal. The managing editor works closely with the editor to maintain the quality of the journal and with an assistant or associate production editor to see that the work is carried out on time.

JOURNAL OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND LIFE SCIENCES EDUCATION

The *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education* is an outgrowth of the agronomic education section formerly published in *Agronomy Journal*. It was established as a separate journal by ASA in 1971 under the title *Journal of Agronomic Education*. In 1992 it was given its present name when its scope was expanded and a number of organizations were brought in as cooperators.

From 1971 through 1997 the journal was published twice a year. Since then its papers have been electronically published on the ASA webpage (at www.jnrlse.org) after acceptance and editorial processing. At the end of each year the papers for that year are collected and published in an annual archival paper copy.

The journal accepts reports of original studies pertaining to concepts of K-16, resident, extension, and industrial education. This includes analysis and synthesis of existing knowledge or research, instructional techniques and methodology, surveys of instruction, and other studies that contribute to the development or better understanding of educational efforts. Reviews or digests of comprehensive and well-defined scope are acceptable. Other types of manuscripts published in JNRLSE include computer software articles, case studies, peer reviewed web lessons/learning activities, profiles, notes, news features, slide set articles, media reviews, and letters to the editor. Articles may confirm and strengthen the findings of others, revise established ideas or practices, or challenge accepted theory, providing the evidence presented is significant and convincing. Manuscripts based mainly on personal philosophy or opinion are acceptable if they conform to the above criteria.

The editorial board consists of the ASA Editor-in-Chief, an editor, a number of associate editors, a managing editor, the publications director, and the chief executive officer.

Editorial Responsibilities

Editor. The editor is responsible for the overall quality and intellectual content of the journal. The editor supervises the activities of the associate editors and makes final decisions on acceptance or release of manuscripts. If a contribution is released, the editor corresponds directly with the author, stating reasons for the rejection.

The Editor oversees the electronic submission and review system via the online manuscript tracking program.

One of most important and critical functions of the editor is the selection of members to serve on the editorial board. The editor lives or dies by the people that are chosen. The editor, after consultation with the ASA Editor-in-Chief and on behalf of the ASA President, appoints new and replacement associate editors.

The editor serves as chair of the editorial board of the journal, and works with members of the editorial board to recommend editorial policies to the board of directors. The editor informs the board of directors of matters through the editor-in-chief and maintains close contact with the managing editor and the Headquarters office on production of the journal. Other responsibilities are similar to those of the editor of *Agronomy Journal*.

Associate Editors. Selected in fields of specialization according to the scope of *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education*, associate editors are appointed in resident education for soils and crops, extension education for soils and crops, industrial education, international education, and general extension education. Cooperators have an opportunity to suggest someone to be appointed to the editorial board. The associate editors representing cooperators have the additional responsibility of encouraging members of their society to submit manuscripts to the journal and to subscribe.

Associate editors solicit reviews, evaluate papers, and recommend acceptance, revision, or release by using the electronic submission and review system available on the internet. Their responsibilities and those of reviewers are similar to those listed for *Agronomy Journal*. An associate editor who believes a manuscript should be released does not contact the author, but instead returns the entire file to the editor for further processing.

Managing Editor. Duties of the managing editor are similar to those outlined for *Agronomy Journal*.

CROP SCIENCE

Crop Science, published bimonthly, is the official publication of the Crop Science Society of America. Publication began in January 1961, 6 years after CSSA was organized, and has been published bimonthly ever since. Beginning in 1998 it was also published electronically on the internet.

Crop Science publishes original research in crop genetics; breeding; cytology; metabolism; physiology; ecology, turfgrass; weed science; crop quality, production, and utilization; cell biology and molecular genetics; and plant genetic resources.

Articles reporting experimentation or research in field crops or reviews or interpretation of such research will be accepted for review as papers. Short articles concerned with experimental techniques, apparatus, or observations of unique phenomena will be accepted for review as Notes. The journal also publishes book reviews, papers on software, and "Review and Interpretation" and "Perspectives" papers.

Editorial Responsibilities

Editor. Similar to the editor of *Agronomy Journal*, the editor of *Crop Science* is responsible for overall quality of the intellectual content of the journal, chairs the editorial board, implements policy decisions on editorial matters defined by the CSSA Board of Directors.

The Editor oversees the electronic submission and review system via the online manuscript tracking program.

One of most important and critical functions of the editor is the selection of members to serve on the editorial board. The editor lives or dies by the people that are chosen. The editor, after consultation with the CSSA Editor-in-Chief and on behalf of the CSSA President, appoints new and replacement associate editors.

The editor may write editorials or solicit manuscripts on special topics. Several categories of papers, including letters to the editor, "Review and Interpretation" papers, and "Perspectives" papers are approved by the editor after input from members of the editorial board or ad-hoc reviewers.

The editor prepares an annual report for the Society describing the journal status and recommendations for changes and prepares the minutes of the annual board meeting published each year.

Special handling procedures are in effect for research papers and notes submitted for possible publication in the turfgrass science and cell biology and molecular genetics sections. These will be detailed in the following paragraphs.

Technical editors and regular associate editors. The technical editors and associate editors use the electronic submission and review system available on the internet. All research papers and notes submitted for possible publication in other sections of the journal than those mentioned in the next paragraph will be assigned directly to one of the technical editors. The technical editor assigns the paper a registration number and assigns the paper to an associate editor for review and processing, similar to the procedures outlined above for *Agronomy Journal*. The associate editor recommends acceptance or rejection of the paper and returns it to the technical editor for final disposition. If accepted, the paper is forwarded to the managing editor for editing and publishing. If rejected, the technical editor conveys that information to the author.

Associate editors who receive and approve papers. Papers submitted to the turfgrass science and cell biology and molecular genetics sections are assigned directly to one of the associate editors in those divisions, whose names and addresses are also listed in the masthead of each issue.

The turfgrass science associate editors seek the assistance of outside volunteer reviewers; the cell biology and molecular genetics associate editors select their reviewers from the other associate editors in their division.

The associate editors in these two divisions have the authority to accept or reject manuscripts, and return the rejected manuscripts to the authors and forward the accepted manuscripts to the managing editor for final editing and publishing.

Managing Editor. The duties of the managing editor are similar to those outlined above for *Agronomy Journal*.

THE PLANT GENOME

With the growth of the plant sciences, genetics, physiology, and biotechnology have merged and CSSA found it necessary to begin a new journal, *The Plant Genome*. The first issue was published as a *Crop Science* supplement with the November–December 2006 issue. The journal is published quarterly.

The Plant Genome publishes Original Research papers, Activities and Resources reports that are important to the genomics community, Editorials, and also Review and Interpretation articles that couple genomics with crops and agriculture. These categories may be modified or expanded as necessary.

Occasionally, authors will ask whether their articles are best suited for *The Plant Genome*, or for the Genomics, Molecular Genetics & Biotechnology (C-7) section of *Crop Science*. In response, the Editorial Board will review submissions to decide on the best fit of the articles, and with permission of the authors manuscripts may be transferred from one category to the other.

Editorial Responsibilities

Editor. The editor is responsible for overall quality of the intellectual content of the journal and implements policy decisions approved by the CSSA Board of Directors. The editor decides on procedures for manuscript submission, review and referee criteria, acceptance, release, and publication. The editor delegates editorial functions to other members of the editorial board, and advises on administrative functions of the managing editor. The editor operates an appeal procedure for authors whose manuscripts are rejected and may write editorials or solicit manuscripts on special topics. Letters to the editor are approved by the editor, but the editor seeks advice of the editorial board and others as needed.

The Editor oversees the electronic submission and review system via the online manuscript tracking program.

The editor prepares an annual report for the Society describing the journal status and recommendations for changes and prepares the minutes of the annual board meeting published each year.

Associate Editors. The editor utilizes associate editors from the *Crop Science* board. The editor assigns papers to an associate editor, who obtains at least two reviews for each paper, one of which would normally be done by the associate editor. If two reviews are favorable, the associate editor has the authority to communicate with the author to obtain needed revisions and, when the paper is satisfactory, may accept the paper. If a paper requires drastic revision or is unacceptable after two unfavorable reviews, the associate editor notifies the editor. The associate editor uses the electronic submission and review system available on the internet.

Managing Editor. The duties of the managing editor are similar to those outlined above for the managing editor of *Agronomy Journal*.

JOURNAL OF PLANT REGISTRATIONS

The *Journal of Plant Registrations* was first published in May 2007. Previously, the registrations were published in *Crop Science*. Reports on new cultivars, elite germplasm, parental lines, and genetic stocks will be accepted for review as crop registration papers.

The format for registrations is a format closely resembling other refereed journal articles and offers breeders and geneticists the opportunity to better highlight their scientific accomplishments. Information required includes documentation of methods. Data tables and figures are encouraged as well as photographs demonstrating the uniqueness of new materials.

The *Journal of Plant Registrations* is a peer-refereed journal. The scientific content is reviewed with the same level of rigor as other CSSA journals.

Registration of genetic materials protected by patents, PVP, or other instruments is encouraged by CSSA and the *Journal of Plant Registrations*. The requirements are as follows: "To be registered, plant material must be available for use as a source material for research and breeding. Both nonexclusive and exclusive releases must be made available to the public without restriction upon expiry of protections (such as Patents, Plant Variety Protection, or Material Transfer Agreements), which may not exceed 20 years." It is the authors' responsibility to state the form of restriction and the way to access the material during the period of restricted-use.

Editorial Responsibilities.

Editor. The editor is responsible for overall quality of the intellectual content of the journal and implements policy decisions approved by the CSSA Board of Directors. The editor decides on procedures for manuscript submission, review and referee criteria, acceptance, release, and publication. The editor delegates editorial functions to other members

of the editorial board, and advises on administrative functions of the managing editor. The editor operates an appeal procedure for authors whose manuscripts are rejected and may write editorials or solicit manuscripts on special topics. Letters to the editor are approved by the editor, but the editor seeks advice of the editorial board and others as needed.

The Editor oversees the electronic submission and review system via the online manuscript tracking program.

One of most important and critical functions of the editor is the selection of members to serve on the editorial board. The editor lives or dies by the people that are chosen. The editor, after consultation with the CSSA Editor-in-Chief and on behalf of the CSSA President, appoints new and replacement associate editors.

The editor prepares an annual report for the Society describing the journal status and recommendations for changes and prepares the minutes of the annual board meeting published each year.

Associate Editors. The editor assigns papers to an associate editor, who obtains at least two reviews for each paper, one of which would normally be done by the associate editor. If two reviews are favorable, the associate editor has the authority to communicate with the author to obtain needed revisions and, when the paper is satisfactory, may accept the paper. If a paper requires drastic revision or is unacceptable after two unfavorable reviews, the associate editor notifies the editor. The associate editor uses the electronic submission and review system available on the internet.

Managing Editor. The duties of the managing editor are similar to those outlined above for the managing editor of *Agronomy Journal*.

SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA JOURNAL

The SSSA Journal is the official publication of SSSA. It was first published in 1937, 1 year after the SSSA was organized. The first 39 volumes were titled *Soil Science Society of America Proceedings*, and in 1976 the name was changed to *Soil Science Society of America Journal*. It was first published as an annual bound volume through 1951. In 1952 it became a quarterly publication and since January 1958 it has appeared bimonthly. Beginning in 1998 it was also published electronically on the internet.

The SSSA Journal is the normal channel for publication of papers and Notes reporting on original research in the subject matter divisions of the Society. Reviews of research, comments and letters to the editor, symposia papers, and papers on the history of soil science may also be published according to guidelines established in the SSSA Publication Policy, which is reproduced in the first issue (January–February) of each volume.

Editorial Responsibilities

Editor. The editor is responsible for overall quality of the intellectual content of the journal and implements policy decisions approved by the SSSA Board of Directors. The editor decides on procedures for manuscript submission, review and referee criteria, acceptance, release, and publication. The editor delegates editorial functions to other members of the editorial board, and advises on administrative functions of the managing editor. The editor operates an appeal procedure for authors whose manuscripts are rejected and may write editorials or solicit manuscripts on special topics. Letters to the editor are approved by the editor, but the editor seeks advice of the editorial board and others as needed.

The Editor oversees the electronic submission and review system via the online manuscript tracking program.

One of most important and critical functions of the editor is the selection of members to serve on the editorial board. The editor lives or dies by the people that are chosen. The editor, after consultation with the SSSA Editor-in-Chief and on behalf of the SSSA President, appoints new and replacement associate editors.

The editor prepares an annual report for the Society describing the journal status and recommendations for changes and prepares the minutes of the annual board meeting published each year.

Technical Editors. Under the direction of the editor, technical editors are responsible for the technical and intellectual content of the journal in their assigned areas. They oversee the work of assigned associate editors in reviewing and evaluating the worthiness of manuscripts submitted to the journal. Technical editors use the electronic submission and review system available on the internet.

Technical editors delegate to associate editors the responsibility of obtaining additional reviews from qualified peer scientists, working with papers to make needed revisions, and making the decision whether to accept or reject the paper. Technical editors, however, maintain the overall responsibility for determining that in-depth and timely reviews are obtained from knowledgeable scientists.

Technical editors also are responsible for taking an active interest in assisting the editor to define the journal's aims, policies, editorial coverage, and in recruiting members for the editorial board.

Associate Editors. The associate editors use the electronic submission and review system available on the internet. An associate editor is assigned, by the technical editor, manuscripts that cover subject matter in the associate editor's division. The associate editor obtains at least two reviews for each paper, one of which would normally be done by the associate editor. If two reviews are favorable, the associate editor has the authority to communicate with the author to obtain needed revisions and, when the paper is satisfactory, may accept the paper. If a paper requires drastic revision or is unacceptable after two unfavorable reviews, the associate editor notifies the technical editor.

Managing Editor. The duties of the managing editor are similar to those outlined above for the managing editor of *Agronomy Journal*.

JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The *Journal of Environmental Quality* is published jointly by ASA, CSSA, and SSSA on a bimonthly basis. The first issue was published in January 1972, when it was published quarterly.

Papers in *Journal of Environmental Quality* cover various aspects of various types of nonnatural impacts on the environment, with particular focus on terrestrial and aquatic systems. Emphasis is given to the understanding of underlying processes rather than to monitoring. Papers should be broad in scope.

Contributions reporting original research or brief reviews and analyses dealing with some aspect of environmental quality in natural and agricultural ecosystems are accepted from all disciplines for consideration by the editorial board. Papers may be volunteered, invited, or coordinated as a symposium. Acceptance of a group of symposium papers for collective publication is limited to one such group per issue.

The journal publishes contributions under the headings of (i) Technical Reports, (ii) Reviews and Analyses, (iii) Environmental Issues, (iv) Short Communications, (v) Letters to the Editor, and (vi) Book Reviews. Reviews and Analyses papers and book reviews may be invited by the editor.

Technical reports published in JEQ are grouped by subject matter. Manuscript authors are given the opportunity to designate the subject matter heading under which the article could logically appear. These subject areas are periodically reviewed by the JEQ editorial board and are subject to change. The subject matter areas are: heavy metals in the environment, plant and environment interactions, organic compounds in the environment, surface water quality, ground water quality, ecosystem restoration, vadose zone transport processes and chemical transport, waste management, atmospheric pollutants and trace gases, landscape and watershed processes, wetlands and aquatic processes, bioremediation and biodegradation, and ecological risk assessment.

Editorial Responsibilities

Editor. The editor serves as chair of the editorial board for the journal and supervises the editorial activities of the technical editors and associate editors. The editor interacts with members of the editorial board to set procedures for manuscript submission, review, referee criteria, acceptance, release, and publication. The editor solicits suggested topics and authors for invited review or synthesis papers and extends the invitation to prospective authors. As requested, the editor reports to the boards of directors of the three societies on the state of the journal and on the activities and recommendations of the editorial board.

The Editor oversees the electronic submission and review system via the online manuscript tracking program.

One of most important and critical functions of the editor is the selection of members to serve on the editorial board. The editor lives or dies by the people that are chosen. The editor, after consultation with the ASA Editor-in-Chief and on behalf of the ASA President, appoints new and replacement associate editors. Technical editors are appointed by the ASA Editor-in-Chief on behalf of the ASA President.

The editor also keeps the ASA Editor-in-Chief informed about editorial progress and maintains close contact with the managing editor and the Headquarters office with regard to the production of the journal. Other responsibilities are similar to those shown for the editor of *Agronomy Journal*.

Technical Editors. Under the direction of the editor, technical editors are responsible for the technical and intellectual content of the journal in their assigned areas. They oversee the work of assigned associate editors in reviewing and evaluating the worthiness of manuscripts submitted to the journal. Technical editors use the electronic submission and review system available on the internet.

Technical editors delegate to associate editors the responsibility of obtaining additional reviews from qualified peer scientists, working with papers to make needed revisions, and recommending whether to accept or reject the paper. Technical editors, however, maintain the overall responsibility for determining that in-depth and timely reviews are obtained from knowledgeable scientists. Technical editors recommend to the editor acceptance or release of manuscripts.

Technical editors also are responsible for taking an active interest in assisting the editor to define the journal's aims, policies, editorial coverage, and in recruiting members for the editorial board.

Associate Editors. The associate editors are chosen according to subject matter areas of environmental quality instead of the traditional subject matter divisions of the three societies. Associate editors work with technical editors in their assigned areas, by using the electronic submission and review system available on the internet.

Associate editors' responsibilities and duties are similar to those listed for *Agronomy Journal*.

Managing Editor. Duties of the managing editor are similar to those outlined for *Agronomy Journal*.

VADOSE ZONE JOURNAL

Vadose Zone Journal is published quarterly by the Soil Science Society of America. The journal is online only and is available at www.vadosezonejournal.org. The first issue was published in August 2002. Geological Society of America is a journal cooperator.

Vadose Zone Journal (VZJ) is an outlet for interdisciplinary research and assessment of the vadose zone, the mostly unsaturated zone between the soil surface and the permanent groundwater table. The scope of the journal includes all physical, chemical, and biological processes operating in this zone. Authors represent a broad range of disciplines, including soil physics, geophysics, hydrogeology, geochemistry, soil chemistry, microbiology, terrestrial ecology, environmental engineering, agricultural engineering, and engineering associated with construction, petroleum, and chemical technologies. Many human activities are known to have an impact on the vadose zone, and hence all of the subsurface environment. The objective of VZJ is to disseminate information to facilitate science-based decision making and sustainable management of the vadose zone.

The journal publishes contributions in the following categories: Reviews and Analyses, Original Research Papers, Data and Data Analyses, Notes, Comments, Letters to the Editor, and Book Reviews. The journal occasionally highlights topics in Special Sections.

Editorial Responsibilities

Editor. The editor is responsible for the overall quality and content of the journal, including developing the journal's scope according to growth in vadose zone research. The editor supervises the associate editors and makes final decisions on the acceptance or release of manuscripts. The editor corresponds with the author to communicate acceptance or release. The editor oversees the electronic submission and review system via the online manuscript tracking program.

The editor, after consultation with the SSSA editor-in-chief and on behalf of the SSSA president, appoints new and replacement associate editors.

The editor chairs the editorial board and works with its members to recommend editorial policies to the board of directors. The editor informs the board of directors of matters through the editor-in-chief and maintains close contact with the managing editor and Headquarters office on issues of production. Other responsibilities are similar to those of *Agronomy Journal*.

Co-Editors. The co-editors function as the technical editors do for *Agronomy Journal*. Co-editors are appointed by the SSSA editor-in-chief on behalf of the SSSA president and after consultation with the editor.

Under the direction of the editor, co-editors are responsible for the technical and intellectual content of the journal in their assigned areas. They oversee the work of assigned associate editors in reviewing and evaluating the worthiness of manuscripts.

The co-editors use the electronic submission and review system available on the internet. Co-editors delegate to associate editors the responsibility for obtaining additional reviews from qualified peer scientists. Co-editors, however, maintain the overall responsibility for determining that in-depth and timely reviews are obtained from knowledgeable scientists. When revisions of manuscripts are needed, co-editors normally delegate to associate editors the responsibility of corresponding and working with authors. Associate editors do not have the authority to accept or reject manuscripts. Instead, associate editors recommend the disposition of manuscripts to the co-editor, who is free to accept, modify, or disagree with that recommendation.

Co-editors notify authors when manuscripts are found to be worthy or unworthy of publication and inform the editor and managing editor.

Co-editors also are responsible for taking an active interest in assisting the editor to define the journal's aims, policies, editorial coverage, and in recruiting members for the editorial board.

Associate Editors. Selected in fields of specialization according to the scope of the journal, associate editors represent the various areas of vadose zone research. Associate editors solicit reviews, evaluate papers, and recommend acceptance, revision, or release. Responsibilities of associate editors and those of reviewers are similar to those listed for *Agronomy Journal*. Associate editors make recommendations to the editor for release or acceptance of manuscripts.

Managing Editor. Duties of the managing editor are similar to those outlined for *Agronomy Journal*.