

## Editorial

# New Initiatives to Sustain Our Forward Momentum

In January 2001, *Plant Physiology* will celebrate its 75th birthday. In the past 75 years, the Journal has been transformed from a small upstart into a major international medium for the publication of many types of scientific articles dealing with plant development and function. Progress in plant biology has been phenomenal and we are now witnessing a veritable explosion of new information and research directions. *Plant Physiology* intends to lead, not just keep up, in these exciting times. The recent dramatic rise in the “impact factor” of *Plant Physiology* indicates that the Journal is in the mainstream of the most rapidly moving multiple fronts of plant research. To clarify our policy on which papers to consider for publication, we have enunciated clear guidelines for both the editors and reviewers. In addition, we announce a major new initiative.

### GUIDELINES FOR PUBLICATION

*Plant Physiology* is an international journal that publishes primarily full-length papers containing new, significant information bearing on broad aspects of plant biology. The areas of interest include, but are not restricted to, plant development, cell and molecular biology, biochemistry, biophysics, bioenergetics, genetics, and physiology, as well as an understanding of the plant as a whole organism and its interactions with the environment and with symbionts, pathogens, and pests. The editors welcome original, full-length, comprehensive, and timely papers that represent advances in our understanding of how plants function in normal environments and when subjected to abiotic and biotic stresses. We also encourage the submission of manuscripts that bridge plant science and other fields, such as molecular evolution, functional genomics, proteomics, molecular analysis of Mendelian and quantitative traits, structural biology, and biotechnology.

### FULL-LENGTH ARTICLES

The emphasis will always be on the extent to which the article contributes to our understanding of how plants develop and function. Because the methodology of plant science has come to encompass everything from biochemistry to microscopy and immunochemistry, from structural biology to molecular biology, and from genetics to live cell imaging, submissions are welcome regardless of experimental approach. To warrant publication in the Journal, a manuscript must provide new insight into biological processes, address function, and be interesting to a wide audience. The Journal will not, in general, publish papers that contain purely descriptive information, that are merely confirmatory, or are preliminary or incomplete reports, or reports documenting well-known processes in a species in which this process has not yet been documented. To be considered for publication, papers that report the purification of proteins or the cloning of genes must include functional aspects.

### A NEW INITIATIVE: BREAKTHROUGH TECHNOLOGIES

Because technological innovations accelerate the rate of progress in science, we now encourage submission of manuscripts reporting new technology breakthroughs. These will be published when judged by the editor to represent advances of exceptional significance and broad applicability and interest. Dr. Robert Last from Cereon will be the Associate Editor responsible for this category. Authors who wish to submit to this category are encouraged to correspond with Dr. Last (rob.last@cereon.com) about the content of the article they wish to submit. The first article appears in this issue and is featured on the cover.

### RENEWED EMPHASIS

#### Scientific Correspondence

These short contributions will be rapidly reviewed by a member of the Editorial Board. They will provide plant scientists with a forum to discuss new scientific ideas based on an analysis of the existing literature or on a few experiments. Such contributions are limited to three printed pages, including references, figures, and tables. Persons wishing to write a *Scientific Correspondence* article may contact the Editor-in-Chief to determine whether the proposed article fits the category. We actively solicit such short articles and acceptance will depend on the extent to which they challenge our thinking into new directions.

### Updates

These are solicited reviews of recent progress that are meant to be teaching tools. Authors need to be aware of the specific requirements for *Updates*. All of the articles are invited, and scientists wishing to contribute an *Update* must first correspond with the Editor-in-Chief to elicit an invitation. All uninvited *Updates* submitted to the Journal will be returned to the authors.

### TRANSITION

On May 1, 2000, there will be a change at the top: Maarten J. Chrispeels will step down, and Natasha V. Raikhel will take over as the Editor-in-Chief. At the time of the transition, the Editorial Board will be broadened to add Features Editors and Associate and Monitoring Editors in development and emerging research directions such as genomics and molecular evolution, while maintaining strength in the areas that have come to be "traditional" areas of plant biology. We want to assure you that we have worked together to bring about a smooth transition, that the Journal will continue to maintain the highest standards, and that it will continue to serve the needs of the international community of plant biologists.

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