

EDITORIAL

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By the time this item is in print, the 2001 AAFS (Seattle, WA) meeting will be closely approaching. The journal will be in its 46th year of continuous publication, and operations will have been transferred to the sixth editor, Dr. Michael Peat from the Toxicology Section. I succeeded Dr. Abel Dominquez in 1992, and deeply appreciate the confidence the Academy's Boards of Directors has shown in entrusting me with the stewardship of this publication for eight-plus years. If the journal has been successful in these years—and I believed it has—many people, including authors, editorial board members, guest reviewers, and the staff at ASTM, share the credit.

We have grown now to about 1500 full-size pages per year, and are distinctly international in character—about half the submissions to this journal have been from countries other than the United States for quite a few years. A number of policy and style changes have been implemented. A 1987–1993 index was published to complement the earlier 1972–1986 one. Within the past couple years too, ASTM and AAFS have cooperated in producing a searchable, free vocabulary online index as well as online tables of contents for the journal covering 1981 issues forward.

We have been working together toward online availability of journal issues, and online publishing for some time. Online avail-

ability of journal articles beginning with material published 1998 or later has been implemented. AAFS members can download items from ASTM's web site at any time through the "members" side for the AAFS web site. Non-AAFS members can do so also, but must pay a fee. About a year from now, in 2002, the journal will be published by posting on the web as soon as items are copy-edited and styled, and before the paper journal appears. We have plans to use web publishing as a way of decreasing the lag times between acceptance and appearance. Authors will be required to meet certain requirements in order to expedite the web-publishing of their manuscripts, but those requirements will be straightforward for most authors. Although I have tended to think web publishing of our journal was "in the future," plans for its near-term implementation have become a reality. It may well be that within a few years, the membership of AAFS will conclude that the paper version of the journal is no longer a necessity.

As the revolution in electronic information exchange, including scientific information exchange, continues at a relentless pace, principals at ASTM and at this journal remain convinced that the quality control afforded by careful review and copy editing of every item cannot be sacrificed in the interests of greater speed. More than ever before, we have a duty to exercise all due care and diligence in publishing decisions and practices, because of *Daubert* requirements in federal and in many state courts, and our role as a journal of record.

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