

Editorial

Mycorrhizae, the mutualistic symbioses between fungi and terrestrial plants, are most widespread and of great biological importance. They occur in the majority of flowering plant families and have great practical significance in agriculture and forestry. Mycorrhizal fungi are found in every terrestrial ecosystem, where they may even represent the second largest biomass component. Research on mycorrhizae started more than 100 years ago and centres now on applied biology, biochemistry, biotechnology, ecology, genetics, molecular biology, morphology, physiology, taxonomy and ultrastructure.

The areas of mycorrhizal research are increasingly being divided into smaller, more specialized fields; the flood of information is incessant and it is difficult for many specialists to achieve an overview of the wider aspects of mycorrhizal symbioses. Thousands of research papers have appeared in non-specialized journals, which only occasionally accept large numbers of paper on mycorrhizae. A specialized journal devoted to all aspects of mycorrhizal research has not been available up to now.

This new journal claims to fill this gap. It will not only publish results from all areas of mycorrhizal research, but also intends to provide the reader with general information on major lines of research in this important branch of science. To achieve this goal, *Mycorrhiza* will include full-length research papers, research notes and review articles on subjects of special interest. Further-

more, the journal will act as a forum for announcements of congresses on mycorrhizae, information about present or future research programs and other important news. Readers and subscribers will not only be those scientists interested in their own specialized area of research, but all research workers and applied biologists who wish to be informed about other fields relating to the study of mycorrhizae.

The members of the editorial board have been chosen carefully. All are distinguished, internationally renowned scientists from major research centres all over the world. They will ensure high scientific standards and, through their comments and suggestions, will mould the character of the journal.

The editor is grateful to the publisher, Springer-Verlag, for its interest in the new journal and for its continuing help and support. The staff members of various departments have been actively involved throughout the preparatory stages; due to their combined efforts, great ability and devotion to detail, a journal of high quality has resulted.

It is our joint hope that *Mycorrhiza* may find a wide distribution within the scientific community, not only among scientists dealing with mycorrhizae, but also among those researchers from other disciplines and applied biologists interested in general aspects of one of the Earth's most fascinating symbioses.

Walter Jülich