
Editorial

It is with a feeling of trepidation that I am returning to the editorial page after a two-issue sabbatical (thanks to Peter Hunton and Dietmar Flock) and the seemingly insoluble problem of having the Journal on your desks during the month that matches the month on your calendar. I am slightly less naïve than I was at this time last year and I know, as I write this, that you will not read it (if, indeed, you read it at all) until on or about 25 July. The processes that the Journal has to go through (and the miles it has to travel) from my desk to your armchair are mind boggling. I do believe that one day I will achieve my goal, but confess that the items of news will be unlikely to be as "hot off the press" as I would like. There is patently no future for me on the front desk of a daily or even monthly magazine.

It has become customary in the first half of each volume for the Editor to produce to the Executive Committee some statistics on the Journal volume just completed. These figures continue to indicate that the Journal is in good heart and being supplied with a steady stream of interesting, topical and scientifically sound articles. Volume 56 was the second to be produced during my term in office and the fourth since the publication frequency returned to four issues per annum. It contained a total of 506 pages, only six fewer than last year's record breaking 512. Including covers, there were 61 (64) pages of advertisements, 49 (49) of which were paid for (the figures in parentheses refer to volume 55). The scientific and technical content of volume 56 occupied 301 (317) pages or 59.5% (63.0%). As a proportion of the four issues which constituted the total volume, translations of the summaries occupied 8.7% (7.0%), Association and Branch affairs 8.7% (6.0%), Calendar 2.6% (2.7%), Working Group reports 0.6% (0%), sponsors 1.6% (1.6%), book reviews 0.2% (0%) and obituaries 0.6% (0%). The remainder consisted of the listings of contents, editorials, notes for contributors and the annual index. Using rather loose definitions and my value judgement to categorise the subjects covered in the 15 papers and six regional reports, seven could be said to be related to welfare/environment, four to health/disease, three to nutrition, three to meat quality, two to husbandry and one each to genetics and the poultry industry. The geographical representation of the authors of the papers was as follows: Western Europe 62.9%, Africa 15.9%, Asia 10.7% and North America 10.5%. It can therefore be seen that the position of Western Europe on the pages of the Journal is even more dominant than it has been previously (43.8% in 1999). To reiterate a plea I made last year, I would welcome receiving more papers from members in North and South America and those countries of the Pacific rim. The Association does, after all, contain significant numbers of members in these parts of the world who exert an important influence on the direction of world poultry science.

Finally, and – somewhat ironically – most importantly, I am delighted to be able to tell you formally (many of you probably already know) that from Volume 57 I have been "joined" in the editorial office by David Martin. I'm absolutely certain that David needs no introduction to you, being the current Editor of *Poultry International* and a well known and respected face seen at many poultry events all over the world. David retires later this year from his present position, and the *WPSJ* and the current editor were extremely fortunate to enlist his services (just being in the right place at the right time!). As Assistant Editor, David will take full responsibility for what my predecessor, Chris Hann, rather dismissively referred to as the "end matter", leaving me to concentrate on the scientific and technical reports. I'm confident that you will see an immediate improvement in this important part of the journal's copy, as David brings his vast experience as a journalist to bear on ferreting out and reporting newsworthy items to you. The Journal may even begin to appear on time.

Jim McNab