

Publication Ethics Guidelines for Journal of Tropical Agriculture and Food Science (JTAFS)

JTAFS Editorial policy:

1. An initial decision will be made by the Chief Editor within a week from the submission date to see whether the manuscript should be proceeded further to the peer-reviewing process or not, after checking the minimum English language and scientific quality of content.
2. All submitted manuscripts judged to be of potential interest will be rigorously reviewed, typically by 2-3 external peer-reviewers but sometimes more if special advice is needed (for example on statistics or a particular technique).
3. JTAFS follows a double-blind peer-review process, whereby authors do not know reviewers and *vice versa*.
4. After receiving all reviewers' comments, authors will be notified to by the chief editor for corrections based exactly on reviewers' recommendations.
5. It is entirely authors responsibility to check their institutional requirements (with the research department) to find whether JTAFS does match with their criteria for publication.
6. Publication of a paper in JTAFS implies that papers will be distributed freely to researchers, for knowledge sharing purposes without any limitations.
7. JTAFS may consider unpublished work that has been submitted or presented in full or in part to a conference proceeding. However, the journal submission must contain significant material that is not included in the proceeding submission.
8. Research involving animals must be performed in accordance with institutional guidelines as defined by the regulatory committee in the country.
9. Authors and co-authors are requested to identify the institutions where the experiments were carried out.
10. For all research work conducted, the JTAFS Editorial Committee reserves the right to request additional information from authors.

1. Code of Ethics for Authors

A. Submitted manuscripts must be the original work of the author(s)

Manuscripts should present an accurate and complete account of the original research performed, including the data collected or used, as well as an objective discussion of the significance of the research. The research report and the data collected should contain sufficient detail and reference to public sources of information for other scientists to reproduce the experiments.

- *Citations*

- Authors should cite those publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work and that will guide the reader quickly to the earlier work that is essential for understanding the present investigation.
- The author must appropriately cite or quote the work and/or words of others if he/she has used them in the current manuscript.
- Authors must cite all related work previously published (either in press or under consideration) that overlaps with the manuscript currently under consideration and inform the Chief Editor of the related work (if necessary). Copies of these manuscripts should be supplied to the editor if requested and the relationships of such manuscripts to the one submitted should be indicated.
- Authors should avoid excessively citing their earlier papers in order to inflate their citation count. If the author has to cite parts of an earlier paper, the material has to be in quotation marks and appropriately cited.
- Authors should cite all sources and keep full records of all information used, including dates for accessing electronic resources.

- *Copyright Law*

- It is the author's responsibility to ensure that his or her submitted work does not infringe any existing copyright.
- Authors should obtain permission to reproduce or adapt copyrighted material (e.g. quotations, artwork or tables taken from other publications)

and provide evidence of approval before submitting the final version of a manuscript.

- ***Submission of same manuscript to multiple journals***

- Authors should submit only unpublished manuscripts and should inform the Editor of related manuscripts that the author has under editorial consideration for publication elsewhere or in press.
- It is unethical to submit a manuscript to more than one journal concurrently unless it is a resubmission of a manuscript rejected for or withdrawn from publication.
- Authors must withdraw papers that are under review with any other journal, if the paper is submitted to JTAFS subsequently.

- ***Resubmission***

- Authors should provide clear justification to the Chief Editor for resubmission of a revised manuscript that has previously been reviewed and rejected by the JTAFS Editorial Committee.

- ***Promptness***

- Authors should be prompt with their manuscript revisions within a reasonable time. If the author cannot meet the deadline given, he or she should inform the Chief Editor of JTAFS as soon as possible and request for an extension.
- All errors discovered in the manuscript after submission must be quickly informed to the Chief Editor.

- ***Withdrawal of manuscript***

- Authors may write to the Chief Editor requesting for a withdrawal of a manuscript that has been submitted for intended publication in JTAFS. However, manuscript withdrawal is only permitted within 2 weeks from the date of submission to JTAFS, or prior to the peer-review process, whichever is earlier.
- If the author withdraws his/her manuscript after the peer-review process has begun, JTAFS has the right to reject the paper without taking into account the referee's evaluation.

- ***Hazards or other important information in paper***
 - Any unusual hazards inherent in the chemicals, equipment, or procedures used in an investigation should be clearly identified in a manuscript reporting the work.
 - Authors should inform the editor if a manuscript contains research material that could pose as a threat to public health and safety, agricultural crops and other plants, animals, the environment, or material.

- ***Fragmented manuscripts***
 - A scientist who intends to send one or more articles on different aspects of a specific project should organize his/her publications in such a way so that each article gives a well-rounded account of the particular aspect.
 - It is generally permissible to submit a manuscript for a full paper expanding on a previously published brief preliminary account (a “communication” or “letter”) of the same work. However, at the time of submission, the editor should be made aware of the earlier communication, and the preliminary communication should be cited in the manuscript.

- ***Personal communication***
 - Information obtained privately, as in conversation, correspondence, or discussion with third parties, should not be used or reported in the author’s work without explicit permission from the investigator with whom the information originated. Information obtained in the course of confidential services, such as refereeing manuscripts or grant applications, should be treated similarly.

B. Co-Authorship

- All co-authors of a paper should have made significant scientific contributions to the work reported and share responsibility and accountability for the results.
- Authors should appropriately recognize the contributions of technical staff and data professionals and cite them in the “Acknowledgements”.

- The submitting author should have sent each co-author a copy of the manuscript and the declaration form to obtain the co-author's approval for submission and publication.
- Deceased persons who meet the criterion for inclusion as co-authors should be so included, with a footnote reporting date of death.
- No fictitious name should be listed as an author or co-author.

C. Conflicts of interest

- The corresponding author must inform the Chief Editor of any potential conflicts of interest in the published article at the time of submission.
- When submitting a manuscript to JTAFS, the author cannot suggest reviewers who are co-authors listed in the manuscript.
- Authors should respect the confidentiality of the review process and not reveal themselves to reviewers or others and *vice versa*.
- Authors should not nominate individuals who have already read and commented on the manuscript or a previous version of the manuscript, since such knowledge will automatically violate the double-blind review process.

D. Plagiarism

- Authors should not engage in plagiarism which is a scientific misconduct and is an unacceptable violation of publication ethics. They should not engage in falsification or fabrication of text or results from another's work, or omit significant materials in their publication.
- Plagiarism in manuscripts submitted to JTAFS is first detected by the Chief Editor and the Editorial Board as well as the reviewers.
- It is strongly suggested that authors wishing to submit manuscripts for intending publication in JTAFS should check their manuscripts for possible plagiarism using any application programs such as *TurnItIn* or *Viper* (free to download) before submitting to the Editor.

- In all cases of alleged plagiarism, falsification and other unethical conduct, confidentiality should be maintained throughout the process and made known only to the reviewers involved. Such cases will be handled by the Editorial Board members on a case-by-case basis.
- ***Self-plagiarism***
 - Authors should not engage in self-plagiarism (also known as duplicate publication) - unacceptably close replication of the author's own previously published text or results without acknowledgement of the source.
 - Material quoted verbatim from the author's previously published work must be placed in quotation marks.
 - It is unacceptable for an author to include significant verbatim or near-verbatim portions of his/her own work, or to depict his/her previously published results or methodology as new, without acknowledging the source.
 - Authors are therefore strongly advised to minimize recycling of previous writings. If unavoidable, authors should reference the previous writings in the manuscript.

E. Images should be free from misleading manipulation

- When images are included in an account of research performed or in the data collection as part of the research, an accurate description of how the images were generated and produced should be provided.

2. Code of Ethics for Editors

A. Unbiased consideration to all manuscripts submitted

- An editor should evaluate all manuscripts offered for publication in fairness based on the intellectual content of the paper regardless of race, religion, nationality, gender, ethnicity, seniority, institutional affiliation or status of the author(s).

- An editor may, however, relate to a manuscript immediately under consideration to others previously or concurrently offered by the same author(s).

B. An editor should manage manuscripts submitted without delay

- An editor should evaluate and manage manuscripts immediately upon submission, but if circumstances are unavoidable, the editors will try to manage the manuscripts within a reasonable time not exceeding more than one month.

C. Based on the reviewer's advice (at least two), policies of the journal editorial board and legal restraint acting against plagiarism, libel and copyright infringement, the editors take full responsibility to make a decision on a manuscript and:

- Accept as it is (with or without editorial revisions)
- Accept with minor revisions (with only minor changes to be made by the author)
- Return to author(s) for major revision (author to revise and resubmit for 2nd round of reviews)
- Reject (also indicate to author further work may be needed to resubmit)
- Reject outright (manuscripts may be rejected without external review if considered by the editors to be inappropriate for the journal. Such rejections may be based on failure of the manuscript:
 - to fit the scope of the journal
 - to be of current or sufficiently broad interest
 - to provide adequate depth of content
 - to be written in acceptable English
 - in lacking novelty
 - in having major technical and/or interpretational problems, and other reasons
 - for non-compliance to the JTAFS publication ethics

D. Confidentiality of information pertaining to manuscripts submitted

- The editor and the editorial team should keep confidential any information pertaining to manuscripts under consideration except to those from whom professional advice is sought.
- After a decision has been made about a manuscript, the editor and members of the editorial team may disclose or publish manuscript titles and authors' names of papers that have been accepted for publication, but no more than that unless the author's permission has been obtained.

- However, any observed conflict of interest pertaining to manuscripts must be disclosed. For example, if a decision has been made to reject a manuscript for ethical violations, the editor and the editorial team members may disclose the manuscript title and authors' names to other journal editors.

E. An editor should respect the intellectual independence of authors

- If an editor is presented with convincing evidence that the main substance or conclusions of a report published are erroneous, the editor should write an appropriate report pointing out the error.
- The original author should make the appropriate corrections.

F. The editor should routinely assess all reviews for quality and other performance characteristics to assure optimal journal performance

- Individual performance data of reviewers must be kept confidential
- Editors may also edit reviews before sending them to authors
- Editors should use performance measures such as review completion times to improve journal performance

G. The Chief Editor has a responsibility to provide the author with an explanation of the Editorial Board's decision on a manuscript.

- Editors have to integrate reviewer's comments and offer additional suggestions to the Author.

3. Code of Ethics for Reviewers

A. Selection of reviewers.

- Reviewers selected for the journal should meet minimum standards regarding their background in original research, publication of articles and previous critical appraisals of manuscripts.
- Peer reviewers should be experts in the scientific topic addressed in the article they review, and should be selected for their objectivity and scientific knowledge.

B. All reviews are expected to be professional, honest, courteous, prompt and constructive.

C. All manuscripts are reviewed in fairness based on the intellectual content of the paper regardless of race, religion, gender or political status of the authors.

D. The reviewer (or referee) of a manuscript should:

- judge objectively the quality of the complete manuscript and
- the supporting information including the experimental and theoretical data, the interpretations, with due regard to the maintenance of high scientific and literary standards
- identify and comment on the major strengths and weaknesses of the study design and methodology
- comment accurately and constructively on the author's interpretation of the data
- comment on any ethical concerns raised by the study
- provide the author with useful suggestions for improvement of the manuscript
- respect the intellectual independence of the authors
- give the proper context and perspective to the Chief Editor to make a decision on acceptance (and/or revision) of the manuscript.

E. Conflicts of interest

- Any observed conflict of interest during the review process must be communicated to the Chief Editor.
- A reviewer should not evaluate a manuscript authored or co-authored by a person with whom the reviewer has a personal or professional connection since the relationship would bias judgment of the manuscript.
- A reviewer should not evaluate a manuscript if she/he is a co-author of the manuscript.

F. All manuscripts sent for review should be treated as confidential

- It should not be retained or copied.
- It should neither be shown to nor discussed with others without the permission of the editor.
- In specific cases, where persons from whom advice is sought, the identities of those consulted may be disclosed to the editor.

- G. A reviewer should be alert to failure of authors to cite relevant work by other scientists.**
- H. A reviewer should call to the editor's attention any substantial similarity between the manuscript under consideration and any published paper or any manuscript submitted concurrently to another journal.**
- I. A chosen reviewer who feels inadequately qualified to judge the research reported in a manuscript should :**
- act promptly and return it to the Chief Editor within a reasonable time.
 - return the manuscript to the Chief Editor if she/he cannot meet the deadline given. Typically, the time to complete the first review is two weeks.
 - notify the editor of probable delays and propose a revised review date.
- J. Reviewers should not use or disclose unpublished information, arguments, or interpretations contained in a manuscript under consideration, except with a written consent of the author.**
- K. The review of a submitted manuscript may sometimes justify criticism, even severe criticism, from a reviewer.**
- L. Notification to Chief Editor**
- Reviewers should notify editors of concerns with respect to manuscripts that can be reasonably expected to provide knowledge, products, or technologies that could be directly misapplied by others, to pose a threat to public health and safety, agricultural crops and other plants, animals, the environment, or material.
 - Any information that may be the reason for the rejection of publication of a manuscript must be communicated to the Editor.