

JEQ, NSE mark their 50th volumes

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What do digital watches, hand-held scientific calculators, and Atari's *Pong* have in common? They were all introduced in 1972. Also launched in 1972 were the *Journal of Environmental Quality* (JEQ), published by ASA, CSSA, and SSSA, and the *Journal of Agronomic Education* (now *Natural Sciences Education*, NSE) published by ASA.

With the start of JEQ and NSE, the Societies created outlets dedicated to publishing environmental and educational scholarly articles. While some environmental and pedagogic articles had found homes in each Society's flagship journal (*Agronomy*

Journal, Crop Science, and the Soil Science Society of America Journal), the Societies saw the value of expanding the publishing options for authors in these fields.

Natural Sciences Education

Originally, articles dealing with agronomic education were published in *Agronomy Journal*. Recognizing the need for a separate education journal, ASA decided to initiate the *Journal of Agronomic Education* (1972–1991; later known as *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education* from 1992 to 2012 and *Natural Sciences Education*, starting in 2013). It was published once or twice a year from 1972 through 1997. Beginning in 1998, its papers were electronically published on the ASA website.

Natural Sciences Education is a cross-disciplinary journal on natural sciences pedagogy. Articles are written by and for educators in the areas of plant science, natural resources, animal science, ecology, the environment, entomology, and more. Because of NSE's wide scope, it is published in cooperation with these societies: American Phytopathological Society, Ecological Society of America, Entomological Society of America, Agricultural & Applied Economics Association, American Association for Agricultural Education, CSSA, and SSSA.

The founders' vision of the *Journal of Agronomic Education* matches the current scope of NSE. Co-editors W.F. Hueg, Jr. and B.R. Bertramson stated in their [**Volume 1 editorial**](#), 1 “This first issue of the *Journal of Agronomic Education* is ... a publication dealing with the problems and opportunities in plant and soil science education.” They go on to say, “We believe the journal may serve educators and communicators of other agricultural disciplines to which agronomy is closely related—such as horticulture, entomology, and plant pathology. The basic teaching methods are applicable to teaching in all these related disciplines.”

In publishing NSE, we continue to serve the original goal of its founders by formalizing the association with other societies through our cooperators. Continued service to the multidisciplinary community of natural science educators by publishing outstanding, peer-reviewed articles and information is our goal for the future.

Journal of Environmental Quality

As A.A. Hanson, JEQ's first editor, stated in his [editorial to volume 1,2](#) the journal began with the mission to be an outlet for research "concerned with the protection and improvement of environmental quality in natural and agricultural ecosystems." While its scope has been refined over the years, its mission remains the same.

Journal of Environmental Quality, the Societies' first joint publication, publishes original research, reviews and analyses, and environmental issue articles that address anthropogenic impacts on water, soil, and the atmosphere and pertain to some aspect of environmental quality in natural and agricultural ecosystems. The journal publishes articles under various subject headings, which have evolved to reflect current trends in environmental sciences.

The Society presidents outlined their goals in the foreword to [JEQ's first issue 3](#): "To provide a *focus* on environmental quality work. ... To provide *recognition* for scientists whose research is directed toward this area of investigation. ... To make it possible for scientists in other disciplines to *locate and recognize* our contributions to environmental quality more readily than in the past."

As the current JEQ editor, Douglas Smith, noted in his [editorial in Volume 50, Issue 14](#), "If we look back to where we were globally 50 years ago, there were tremendous environmental problems," including acid rain, erosion, and heavy metal contamination. Since that first issue of JEQ in 1972, he continues, "we have certainly come a long way

toward recognizing how we impact the environment and working through how to mitigate those issues." The JEQ board's aim is to be instrumental in solving some of the vexing challenges that face us in 2021, such as "understanding the trade-offs associated with mitigating environmental concerns and developing strategies to ensure the trade-offs do not become larger problems than the original ones, and recognizing and ameliorating emerging environmental concerns before they are pervasive."

Service, Longevity, and Value

While at first glance, JEQ and NSE may not seem to have much in common, they derive from shared goals: to serve a multidisciplinary audience, provide value to authors and readers alike, and expand our Societies' impact and influence on the larger community. With their 50th volumes, these two journals reveal the same success in expanding and adapting to current scholarly trends as was true for their first volumes.

Further Resources

- *Journal of Environmental Quality* home page:
<https://acsess.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15372537>
- *Natural Sciences Education* home page:
<https://acsess.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/21688281>
- Author Resources for ACSESS journals:
<https://www.agronomy.org/publications/journals/author-resources>

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