California Agriculture journal
Guidelines for Special Sections and Focus Issues*

1. We encourage faculty members and Associate Editors to propose topics for special collections (three to five articles) or focus issues (six to ten or more articles).

2. Like all California Agriculture articles, manuscripts for collections and focus issues are research-based and must undergo peer review. Manuscripts are expected to report original research, or reviews of such research. Research should represent a significant advance in a disciplinary field.

3. Collections and focus issues develop through various mechanisms, but must cover subjects of statewide importance and interest. The Editor, or Faculty Chairs, may identify a group of authors with relevant expertise and research, and encourage all to submit manuscripts.

4. For longer collections and focus issues, the Editor may appoint Faculty Chairs to oversee the initial submission of manuscripts. Faculty Chairs assist in coordinating submissions and may be authors themselves. However, typically they do not oversee peer review (as Associate Editors) for manuscripts in the same collection or focus issue.

5. In the case of longer focus issues, the Editor may announce the issue in a formal Request for Proposals. The RFP is distributed to all who have relevant research and expertise. The Faculty Chairs review the proposed abstracts and select authors who are then invited to submit full-length manuscripts.

6. In addition to issuing an RFP, the Faculty Chairs and the Executive or Managing Editors may also identify potential authors (including those outside ANR and UC) and send appropriate letters of invitation.

7. Whether articles are invited or not, they must be accepted through the anonymous peer review process. As is always the case, Associate Editors or Guest Editors oversee the peer review of submitted papers to ensure suitability to the California Agriculture audience and scientific soundness of technical content. All submissions must conform to the Writing Guidelines.
8. There is no requirement that those proposing a focus issue provide funding to defray the cost of publishing a longer edition of the journal. However, we may ask Faculty Chairs to help identify potential sources of outside funding.

9. We commit to final publication dates only after the articles have been reviewed, accepted or rejected, and revised as necessary for acceptance. (At that point, most factors affecting publication date come under our control.)

10. For longer collections or focus issues, we ask interested faculty to submit a brief proposal including their rationale for why this special coverage is important and interesting to our readers, a rough list of proposed articles and possible authors, and suggested timing and distribution.

11. We encourage a well-defined focus for special sections. As early as possible, we begin working with authors to develop context in the form of news stories for the front section, illustrations and photographs, and sidebars.

12. To propose a special section or focus issue, please contact Janet White (jlwhite@ucdavis.edu; (510) 665-2201) and/or Janet Byron (jlbyron@ucdavis.edu; (510) 665-2194).

*Revised, approved at Associate Editor meeting of March 21, 2006*