

Editorial

From time to time the Editorial Board is inquired about the possibilities to devote a Journal issue to a particular field of agricultural research. The appearance of such an issue is then mostly intended to coincide with some special occasion. The desirability, advantages and disadvantages of special issues have been thoroughly discussed at the annual meeting of the Board in January of this year. The main conclusions were that a reticent approval policy should be pursued, that topics of research should be carefully selected for suitability, that all contributions submitted for special issues should be handled as regular manuscripts and should thus be subjected to the Journal's standards and refereeing procedures, and that the contents of special issues should not only be of interest to a relative small group of specialists but also to the broad international audience of the Journal.

Some days after the Board's meeting the proposal was dropped on the Editor's desk to dedicate a special issue to Professor Bolt on the occasion of his retirement from Wageningen Agricultural University. The ceremony had then already been planned, *obiter dictum*, to take place at 5 November 1987. It is obvious that the above recommendations of the Editorial Board and the intentions of the organizers clashed, mainly because of the deterrent limitation of time available to meet the Journal's wishes. Nevertheless, the procedure outlined above was started in an optimistic atmosphere and many of Bolt's colleagues and former students were invited to write a contribution in the form of a scientific paper. The prompt and enthusiastic response was more than encouraging enough to proceed with this adventure.

The efforts of a great number of people have resulted in the present issue, which encompasses 17 papers covering various aspects of pure and applied soil chemistry and soil physics. Thanks are due to all authors for conscientious preparation of their manuscripts and for serious and sometimes persevering revisions, despite of the impossible time schedules. The very important, invisibly incorporated contributions of about 30 referees who have been asked to serve the Journal back-stage especially for this issue, are gratefully acknowledged.

Special thanks are due to Frans A. M. de Haan and Hein F. M. ten Berge who initiated this eventful undertaking and lubricated several vital components of the machinery on the way to its final destination. Being a backslider with respect to soil chemistry and soil physics, it was an honour and a pleasure alike for me to cooperate in this way with Professor Bolt's almost earliest and nearly youngest pupil. We hope that the topics as presented in this issue will be of interest to a wide diversity of readers, and that the combinations of authors' names and subjects treated may satisfy the man many people owe so very much in their scientific education.

On behalf of the Royal Netherlands Society for Agricultural Science we wish Professor and Mrs. Bolt a healthy, long, pleasant, and happy retirement.

M. L. van Beusichem
Editor-in-Chief