

GUIDELINES FOR REFEREES -NZPPS

The referee has the responsibility of checking the validity of the paper, the soundness of the methods used and the author's conclusions in relation to the data presented. Because of the tight schedule we must keep to ensure publication of the Journal on time, it is essential that you process all papers as quickly as possible. Please use the paper number in all correspondence with the editor.

The refereeing instructions, some suggestions on the format, the procedure for dealing with rejected papers and the referee's reporting form are given below.

Refereeing instructions

There are two methods of returning your comments to the authors.

1. **Electronic file.** In Microsoft Word, use the *Tools/Track changes/Highlight Changes* menu to check the *Track changes while editing* box. This means that all changes you make will be seen in the document. The author then only needs to go through the document using the *Accept or Reject Changes* function. You may also put comments in the document using the *Insert/Comments* menu. These will be highlighted in yellow and can be seen when the cursor is held over the comment. The comments can be removed by right clicking on the comment and choosing *Delete Comment*. When you have finished refereeing, please fill out the referee's reporting form electronically and e-mail **both** files to the **editor** (editor@nzpps.org). **Please do not** e-mail either file to the author, as the editor's suggestions will also be added to the manuscript before sending it on to the author.
2. **Hard copy.** Mark your comments and suggested changes on the hard copy of the paper and fill out the referee's reporting form (attached). Please make a photocopy of the comments on the paper and the reporting form. You may also like to keep a photocopy for yourself in case there is any further discussion with the author or editor.
 - If the paper is a 1 (needs minor corrections), send one copy to the author and one copy to the editor (Dr Sue Zydenbos, Old West Coast Road, Halkett, RD1, Christchurch).
 - If the paper is a 2 or 3 (needing major revisions or rejection), please send **both** copies to the editor and none to the author.

Do not worry too much about formatting of the paper (headings, layout, reference citations, Table and Figure captions, etc.), as the editor will deal with this. Please concentrate on the content of the paper, particularly the methods used, the statistical analyses, the way the results are presented, the interpretation and the discussion of the results as well as the references to relevant literature. Note that there are some minor changes in the formatting of papers in the 2005 journal.

Paper Format

Authors are given four printed pages free of charge, with every additional page costing \$100 plus GST. Four printed pages gives approximately 2000 words, including equivalent space for tables and figures. The length of a paper is determined by what the authors want to present and how much they want to pay, as well as at the editor's discretion, rather than by specific NZPP requirements for a short paper. Therefore only recommend a reduction in the length of papers if it is to remove duplication or excessive wordiness.

Authors should adhere to the following format: Abstract not exceeding 150 words (obligatory); Introduction; Method; Results (or Results and Discussion); Discussion and/or Conclusion; Acknowledgements; References.

Attention should be given to the following points.

- **Title** should accurately reflect the contents of the paper and be clear and concise.
- Up to ten **keywords** should be given.
- **Abstract** should be not more than 150 words and give a concise account of what was done, how it was done, the results obtained and the conclusions drawn.
- **Introduction** should give a concise reason for the work, a synopsis of previous work leading to why this research was undertaken, a brief review of the literature to give background information on the topic, adequate references to substantiate any information.
- **Methods and materials** should contain: description of the materials and equipment used; dates experiments conducted; location of field experiments; relevant environmental conditions (temperature, moisture etc.); spray concentrations, dilution rates, pressures; trial design, replications, plot size; how, when and what measurements were taken.
- **Results** should be clearly presented. Is there too much or too little data? Are the data presented in a suitable form, i.e. tables or figures and not both for the same data? Are tables and figures clear and well set out? Have the data been suitably analysed.
- **Discussion** should interpret the results; assess the validity of the results; draw conclusions from those results in relation to what the research set out to achieve; be relevant to the data presented; discuss the implications of the research in relation to other work; use relevant references which may support or contradict the results; and outline directions for future work if this is appropriate.
- Separate **conclusions** are frequently not necessary. If one is included, check that it is not simply a rewrite of the abstract.

Rejection of papers

Papers must be rejected if:

- there are insufficient data to support any useful conclusions
- results have been incorrectly interpreted
- data have not been statistically analysed (unless there is a very good reason for not doing so)
- information in the paper is either not original or not new, unless the paper is a review
- there is insufficient information to warrant publication as a full paper

Papers should also be rejected if in your opinion they need major revision in any of the following areas:

- Information. For example, if information in any section of the paper is inadequate, such as there is no clear objective to the paper.
- Presentation of the paper. For example, if the paper needs major improvement in readability, arrangement, language, etc. Papers should be clearly written, arranged in a logical order, concise (look for repetition, unnecessary information or wordiness) and grammatically correct.
- Presentation of results. For example, if major revision is needed in presentation of data in tables and/or figures or if there is too much or too little data given.
- Statistical analysis. For example, if these are absent without good reason or not appropriate.

If you feel a paper should be rejected, please return the manuscript to the editor, giving good, written reasons why the paper should not be published. Please do not contact the author directly without first discussing this with the editor. The editor will probably ask for a second referee's opinion before informing the author of the rejection.