

Editor's preface

Vale atque ave

Now at the end of our third year, the journal is experiencing its first major overhaul in personnel. James Reeves, who has steered the Management Board with the calmest aplomb through the journal's conception, gestation, birth and toddlerhood, is leaving NIAB and the research world at the end of the year. We are fortunate to be able to welcome Andy Greenland as his successor to the chairmanship.

It was down to James' vision and dogged persistence that *PGR:CEU* was created from the ashes of *Plants, Varieties and Seeds*, which for many years had been NIAB's 'house' journal. A widening of the research role and direction at NIAB meant that plant genetic resources represented a clearer focus than *PVS* could, and James supplied the energy to drive this change through by organising, at frighteningly short notice, an international symposium in Cambridge in the summer of 2002, from which many of the papers published in the inaugural issue of *PGR:CEU* emerged. At the same time he recruited me as editor, as a signal that the new journal wanted to develop a profile far beyond NIAB itself. The pleasing progress of the journal in the three years since its inception is due as much as anything else to the sure-handed management that James applied, and we will miss this in his absence.

Andy Greenland comes to NIAB and to *PGR:CEU* with a wealth of experience in plant genetics and breeding research, after a substantial period at the commercial end of the science. Enforced changes to a system that is working can often feel uncomfortable, but we are confident that this new face will fit well. Often change is of course reinvigorating, and we look forward to the contribution that Andy surely will make.

Meanwhile we are confident that the journal will continue to prosper – our submission rates are up, our selectivity is up and we are in the latter stages of planning for our second special issue, expected to appear in 2006. The latter will reflect the content of an international symposium on genomics-based plant germplasm research, which took place in Beijing in April 2005. As an overseas attendee at this meeting, I could not help but be struck by the intensity and volume of PGR research being conducted in China. In so many ways, from the manufacture of plastic toys to the delivery of cutting edge biology, China has been emerging as a major force in the modern world. Watch this space!

Robert Koebner

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