

EDITORIAL

Carpe Diem: an update on the *Journal of Nutritional Science*

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The *Journal of Nutritional Science* (*JNS*) is now in its twelfth year having been launched in February 2012⁽¹⁾. At the time, the setting up of a fully (gold) Open Access (OA) nutritional sciences journal ensured that the Nutrition Society, together with Cambridge University Press, was ahead of the curve in the move to OA publishing. Other Learned Societies have since followed, including the American Society for Nutrition with the launch in 2017 of *Current Developments in Nutrition*.

OA is now firmly established as a preferred approach to scientific publication and although the initial drive came from the academic community itself, funding organisations have increasingly mandated this as a requirement in the dissemination of work emanating from their support. In the UK, for example, the Research Councils and the Research Excellence Framework (REF) for universities require OA publication, and this is also the case for funding bodies internationally, including the European Union.

JNS is closely linked with the *British Journal of Nutrition* (*BJN*), and indeed it was launched as a ‘sister’ journal⁽²⁾. Although the central intent of *JNS* was (and remains) to provide a fully OA forum, it was also envisaged that it would be a route for the publication of articles that though scientifically sound were not accepted by the *BJN* – which at the time was receiving more quality manuscripts than it could accept, or indeed publish within a reasonable timescale.

The link to the *BJN* provided a key route for submissions to *JNS*, namely through the transfer of appropriate manuscripts. In the early years, this transfer pathway which now includes another Nutrition Society journal, *Public Health Nutrition*, represented the main source of articles for *JNS*. However, although there are an increasing number of such transfers, direct submissions are now the greatest source of manuscripts with greater than two-thirds coming through this means in 2022 – representing a five-fold increase in direct submissions

since 2019. It should be noted that transferred manuscripts receive an expedited review having already been refereed and revised.

JNS encompasses the full spectrum of nutritional science – from molecular biology and nutrigenomics to public health and policy – with the boundaries constituting the subject being interpreted liberally. The key criterion for acceptance is scientific soundness; the extent to which there is a substantial expansion of nutritional knowledge *per se*, or a study is genuinely innovative, albeit desirable are not central criteria. Studies with a local focus such as those relating to the specific circumstances of a particular region or community, without necessarily having a wide international impact, are welcomed.

The broad remit is reflected in the extent to which *JNS* is truly international, submissions in 2022 emanating from nearly 50 countries with a wide geographical spread. The largest number of submissions came from Australia, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. This was largely mirrored by the papers published from each of these countries. The number of submissions, as well as papers published, have increased substantially over the past 3–4 years, both rising approximately three-fold between 2019 and 2022. From the beginning, as with most fully OA journals, *JNS* has been published exclusively online.

JNS is included in the main subject databases and will receive an impact factor this summer for the first time while a CiteScore has been available for several years. A number of articles in the journal have been well cited with one, a review article on flavonoids by Panche *et al.* in 2016⁽³⁾, having received an exceptional number of citations – >2300 to date (data from Scopus). Such a remarkably high level of citation would place this article as the third most cited of all time if published in the *BJN* with its 75+ year history.



When *JNS* was founded, the initial vision was that the Editor-in-Chief of the *BJN* would also assume the same role for *JNS*, and that the two journals would share a common Editorial Board, reflecting the very close relationship between them. This arrangement operated during the tenure of the first two Editors-in-Chief, Philip Calder and Graham Burdge. However, it was always envisaged that as *JNS* matured and established its own distinct identity it would gradually become quite separate from the *BJN*. The process of separation was initiated in 2017, when I assumed the role of Editor-in-Chief of *JNS*, Graham Burdge continuing as Editor-in-Chief of *BJN*. Some divergence of the two Editorial Boards also began.

Evolution and change are, of course, normal both for individual journals and for scientific publishing in general as the paradigm shift to OA illustrates. In the case of *JNS*, after 6 years in the role I am stepping down as Editor-in-Chief and am delighted to welcome my successor, Professor Bernard Corfe. Bernard Corfe is a Professor of Human Nutrition & Health in the Human Nutrition Research Centre at the University of Newcastle, UK. His original training was in bacterial genomics and gene regulation, but he has subsequently developed broad interests in human nutrition. He will, I am sure, maintain the momentum that *JNS* has developed and take the journal further forward.

Editing *JNS* and overseeing its development has been a privilege, and serendipitously my connection with the journal goes back to its beginning when Philip Calder asked me to write an article for the launch of volume 1⁽⁴⁾.

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge my gratitude to the members of the Editorial Board, past and present, for their support of *JNS*. I would also like to warmly thank our referees, the staff at Cambridge University Press, and Professor Jayne Woodside, the Honorary Publications Trustee of the Nutrition Society. Finally, particular thanks should go to the many authors who chose to submit their work to *JNS*, and thereby help to establish it as an increasingly valuable forum in nutrition research.

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