The title should be in sentence case, 14pt and left-aligned

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1Affiliation 1; 2Affiliation 2 and 3Affiliation 3

[Notes: Author names given on ScholarOne **must** match those on the paper, both in terms of the authors listed but also the format (i.e. firstnames must be given in full; any middle initials, surname). Affiliations: Country must be included; US states must be 2-letter postal codes, not spelled out; no street addresses or zip codes]

**Corresponding author:** Author’s name, Email: xxxxx@xxxx

# Abstract

Please set your language to English (UK), but please note that we use the Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors for spelling, which stipulates that words ending in –ise should be spelled –ize, such as fertilize, fertilizer, minimize, hypothesize, etc. First level headings should be in sentence case, left-aligned and bold: you can use Heading 1 in this template. Note that headings must NOT be numbered. Text should be fully justified, not left-aligned, and double-spaced throughout. You must include continuous line numbering in your main document. The Abstract should be a short description of the work, with the main findings, and must not be longer than 250 words. Abbreviations should be kept to a minimum and must be explained at first mention. You should not begin a sentence with an abbreviation and they should not be used in headings. *P* values should not be included in the Abstract. The Abstract should not be written in italics.

**Keywords:** List of key words, separated by semicolons, as given on Scholar One. Please do not use words that are already in the title

# Introduction

This should be the next section and may be several paragraphs long. Note that in each section or sub-section the first line should NOT be indented but the first line of subsequent paragraphs within that section or sub-section SHOULD (see next paragraph). No blank lines should be left between paragraphs within a section, but one blank line should be left between the end of one section/subsection and the heading of the next. Headings must not be numbered.

This section should give the background to the work, your reasons for undertaking it and the objectives of the current paper.

This section will normally include several references: all references must be cited in the text with the surname of the authors and the date. Where there are 2 authors, both surnames must appear: Surname1 and Surname2. Where there are 3 or more authors, cite as Surname1 *et al*.

Use of brackets depends on the context, for instance ‘Surname1 and Surname2 (year) used…’ or ‘according to previous papers (Surname1 *et al*., year)’. Where several references are cited together, they should be arranged in chronological order first, and then if necessary in alphabetical order according to the first author. Where you have two or more references with the same author(s) and year of publication, they should be designated as *a*, *b*, *c*, etc. Each reference should be separated from the next by a semi-colon, but if you have two citations for the same authors at the same place, cite the authors only once and list both/all publication dates separated by a comma: (FirstRef1 *et al*., 1995; SecondRef1 and SecondRef2, 2001; ThirdRef1 *et al*., 2001, 2012; FourthRef1 *et al*., 2004*a*, *b*).

The last part of your Introduction must state the goal and objectives of your paper clearly and concisely.

# Materials and methods

## **Level 2 headings, or sub-headings, should be in bold, italics, have an initial capital and be left-aligned**

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## **Level 3 headings**

### *Initial capital and italics for level 3 headings, left-aligned*

You can use Heading 3 in this template for level 3 headings. Headings should not contain abbreviations and must not be numbered.

For crops papers, please provide the latitude, longitude and altitude of the experimental site. Latitude and Longitude should be given in degrees and minutes (seconds are not required), not decimal coordinates, and altitude in metres above sea level, written as ‘xx m asl’: (aa°bbʹ N, xx°yyʹ E, xxx m a.s.l.).

All papers must be written in the third person, e.g. ‘it was found that’, not ‘we found’. You must not use ‘this/our paper/study/work’, etc. when referring to your work; use ‘the current paper/work/study/research’ instead, throughout the whole paper. The Summary, Materials and Methods, and Results sections should also generally be in the past tense.

We do not use -1 for ‘per’, and we use a lower-case l for litre, not upper case. So, for example we would NOT write 20 mgL-1 but 20 mg/l, and mg/kg not mg kg-1. Similarly, ‘per square metre’ would be written as /m2, not m-2

Please keep abbreviations to a minimum and ensure that all abbreviations (including chemical symbols and formulae such as N for nitrogen and P2O5) have been explained at first mention (in the Abstract, if applicable, and again at first mention in the text). We do not allow an explanatory paragraph at the beginning of the paper to explain abbreviations. However, please note that we use Fig. or Figs when referring to Figures in the text, and these do not need explained. The only exception is where this is at the start of a sentence: sentences must not begin with an abbreviation, so the full word must be used there.

Wherever you list equipment that has been used, please state the make, model, and city and country of origin in brackets.

We avoid the use of % in most cases, other than where you are describing a relative change in a response (such as ‘increased by 10%’ or ‘a reduction of 2.5%’). For example, we would not say “85-90% of the area”. We would use proportion in that case; in many other cases, such as for concentrations, we would use g/kg or mg/g instead of %. Please check and change throughout the paper where necessary.

For crops papers, you must cite specific codes from recognized international codes for growth stages (GS) where applicable, e.g.

**Zadoks JC, Chang TT and Konzak CF** (1974) A decimal code for the growth stages of cereals. *Weed Research* **14**, 415-421.

**Lancashire PD, Bleiholder H, Van Den Boom T, Langelüddeke P, Stauss R, Weber E and Witzenberger A** (1991)A uniform decimal code for growth stages of crops and weeds. *Annals of Applied Biology* **119**, 561-601.

**BBCH (Biologische Bundesanstallt für Land-und Forstwirtschaft)** (1997) *Growth Stages of Mono-and Dicotyledonous Plants: BBCH Monograph*. Berlin, Germany: Blackwell Wissenschafts-Verlag.

**Meier U** (2001) *Growth Stages of Mono-and Dicotyledonous Plants: BBCH Monograph*. 2nd Ed. Bonn, Germany: Federal Biological Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry.

# Results

The Results MUST be in a separate section from the Discussion. Failure to present them in separate sections will result in your paper being ‘unsubmitted’ and returned to you for the combined section to be separated. If you have a specific reason for writing a combined section, you must make a case for this in your covering letter and it will be discussed with the relevant Editor-in-Chief.

Rather than using a blanket statement at the end of the Materials and Methods section, *P* values should be cited at the appropriate places in the Results, i.e. wherever mention is made of significant results. Please note that we use *P*, not p, P or *p*. Likewise, R2 should be written as *R*2 and r as *r*. For Crops & Soils papers, please use *P* levels of <0.001, <0.01 and < 0.05. For Animals papers, exact *P* values should be quoted, to three decimal places, except for *P* < 0.001.

Results generally should not contain references.

# Discussion

This should draw together your results, present possible reasons for your findings, comparisons with earlier results from other authors, possible reasons for different results, and suggestions for future work. In general, Tables and Figs should not be cited in the Discussion section.

**Conclusion**

This should consist of three or four sentences at the most.

**Supplementary material.** If you are submitting supplementary material for online-only publication, please write: The supplementary material for this article can be found at XXXX.

**Acknowledgements.** This section is optional: if you wish to credit, e.g. people who helped with the work but are not included in the list of authors, for instance statisticians or technicians, they should be listed in the acknowledgements section.

# Author contributions. This section is required. A short statement should be provided indicating how each author contributed to the work. For example: AB and CD conceived and designed the study. CD and EF conducted data gathering. GH performed statistical analyses. AB, EF and GH wrote the article.

# Funding statement. This section is required, but if you received no funding or other financial support for the work, please write: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

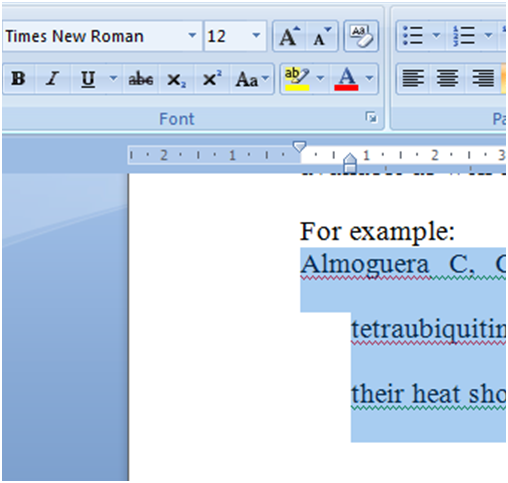
# Competing interests. This section is required and you must declare any conflicts of interest in this section. If there are none, please write: The authors declare there are no conflicts of interest.

# Ethical standards. For any papers using vertebrates, information on the ethical standards that the work adhered to must be written here, including the reference number provided by the relevant approval committee. For the avoidance of any potential doubt or confusion, please write ‘Not applicable’ here if your paper did not include work with vertebrates.

# References

The reference list should be formatted using a hanging indent (as this paragraph is) and no blank lines should be left between references. It must be in alphabetical order by the surname of the first author.

In order to format the list with a hanging indent, the easiest way is to highlight the whole list, then drag the lower half of the tab indicator on the ruler slightly to the right:



Ensure each reference is formatted as per the attached Instructions to Contributors (see also the references given above for growth stages): in particular, notice that author names should be in **bold,** journal titles are *italicised* and written in full, with no comma or full stop after it, and volume numbers are in **bold**. All author names must be listed for each reference***.***

Volume and page numbers are separated by a comma and a space. The full page range is always given, i.e. write ‘675-680’ instead of ‘675-80’. The surname of the last author is preceded with ‘and’, there is no comma after the initials of the last two authors. Issue numbers are generally not used, other than in exceptional circumstances where it is otherwise difficult to locate an article (for example in publications where every issue starts at page 1). For extracts from books, please give Editor names if available as well as the place of publication and the publisher.

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If you are citing electronic resources such as web pages, please cite as if it were a book, using the title of the specific web page in place of the book title. Reference to home pages will not be accepted, other than for searchable databases such as FAOSTAT. You must also include ‘Available online from: <give the exact URL of the specific page being cited> (Accessed <give date of last access>)’ at the end of the reference. For example:

**Instituto Nacional de Estadística** (2015). *Annual Survey on Sheep and Goats Livestock and their Dairy Production.* Madrid: INE. Available online from: <http://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/en/categoria.htm?c=Estadistica_P&cid=1254735727106> (Accessed 11 November 2015).

The month is written in full so that there is no ambiguity between US and UK date formats.

**If your Tables and Figures are presented in the same file, then you must add a page break after the Reference list.**

Tables and Figs should not be presented in the main text, but should either come after the reference list or be submitted as separate files.

Each Table must be followed by a page break, so that each one starts on a new page, together with its title. Please do not use hard returns. Ensure that text wrapping is set to None, not Around. Table and Figure titles should be formatted as follows:

**Table 1/Figure 1.** The title should be in Roman (upright) type, other than Latin terms which should be in *italics*, and should not have a full stop at the end

All abbreviations must be explained in a footnote, including asterisks for *P* levels (\* *P* < 0.05, \*\* *P* < 0.01, \*\*\* *P* < 0.001). Any other footnotes required should be inserted using superscript numbers, in numerical order.

The use of letters to denote significant differences or similarities in Tables and Figures is limited; please refer to the Statistical Note at the end of the Instructions for Contributors for more details. Where they are not appropriate, please add a row to Tables showing the S.E.M. or S. E. D., and D.F. The letters can often be removed from Figures, but if required a note can be added to the legend. If you use error bars on Figs you must explain what they are.

In general, you should not quote values to more than 2 or 3 decimal places, unless this is unavoidable. Usually, values of 10 or more can be rounded to integers or quoted to one decimal place. Error terms MUST be quoted to one decimal place more than the means.

Where you have ± in a table, you must state what the value after the ± is, for example SE. Similarly, you must explain what numbers in parentheses mean. This can be done either in the table title, or in a footnote.

**[insert page breaks between each Table and Figure]**

All figure legends should be written on a sheet separate from the Figs themselves, in a Word file. If you are submitting your Figs in a Word document, the legends can be in the same file as long as they are on a separate sheet, preceding the Figures themselves. Each Figure must be on a separate sheet (i.e. parts *a*, *b*, etc. if applicable should, if possible be on the same sheet but always separated from the next Figure with a page break) with ‘Fig. 1.’, ‘Fig. 2.’ etc. written at the bottom of the relevant page. If you are submitting Figs as tif files or similar, then the legends can appear on a separate sheet at the bottom of one of your Word files, either after the References or the Tables.