

## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

We welcome readers to Volume 9 of the *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food* (IJSAF). In keeping with the journal's international focus we have selected, for this edition, a diversity of papers from authors throughout the world dealing with such topics as the strategies of corporate hog producers in the U.S., the reforming of New Zealand agriculture, the symbolic transformation of Australian rural environments, and community forestry in Mexico. We conclude with an important contribution from Bill Friedland on commodity systems methodology. We thank the authors for submitting their papers to the IJSAF and ask readers to consider the journal as an outlet for their own work. We intend, for example, to compile a special edition (or part of an edition) on the sociological aspects of agro-biotechnology and encourage those researching in that area to submit material.

As most readers know, the IJSAF is concerned with a critical, sociological, understanding of food, of agriculture, and of relations between the two. It covers issues of policy, market, technology, labor – as well as the wider concerns relating to all aspects of production and consumption. It provides a forum for scholars whose research can provide insights into contemporary agri-food restructuring in a globalising economy. It also promotes, where possible, comparative and historical analyses that can contribute not only to a broader political economy and political ecology of agri-food issues, but also to progressive social action.

The new editorial team which is now in place (and will be for the next two years) has sought to streamline the processing of papers that have been submitted to the journal. We are now doing all the 'work' of the journal electronically. When we receive a paper (as a Word attachment) we quickly examine it for content and style. If the paper is clearly not appropriate for the Journal we send an email to the author – usually identifying a more appropriate outlet for publication. If the paper's content is acceptable we check for style. If the author has not conformed to the new style guide we send it back to be reformatted. Once the paper has been received in an acceptable format we provide the paper in electronic form to three reviewers, along with an electronic proforma. Once the reviews of each paper are received, the editors synthesise the comments, and send these back to the author of the paper. If the paper has been accepted for publication, we ask the author for a quick turnaround – of about one month. While this process is still 'on trial' we believe that it will allow us to publish our target of two editions per year.

Readers may be unaware that the Research Committee on the Sociology of Agriculture and Food (RC40) is the only research committee of the International Sociological Association with its own journal. We are very proud of this and hope that we can seek greater participation by RC40 members in the various activities of the journal. We have, for example, begun to identify the main areas of academic strength of members as a prelude to targeting particular people to undertake reviews

of papers. We acknowledge the assistance provided to date, but also ask for increased participation for the future.

Finally, the smooth transition from the previous editor to the current editorial team could not have occurred without the support of Mustafa Koc, David Myhre, Ray Jussaume, Jr., and Phil McMichael. Special thanks also go to Simon Kitto of Central Queensland University who worked, tirelessly and professionally, as editorial assistant for this volume.

*Farshad Araghi*  
*David Burch*  
*Geoffrey Lawrence*