



Policy Guidelines of the Publications Board of The American Phytopathological Society in the Handling of Manuscripts Dealing With Crop Biosecurity and Agricultural Bioterrorism Issues¹

Statement from APS Council

“The Council of the American Phytopathological Society affirms the long-standing position of the Society that plant pathologists will work for the proper and beneficent application of science and will call to the attention of the public or the appropriate authorities, misuses of plant pathology or of information derived from plant pathology research. APS members are obligated to discourage any use of plant pathology contrary to the welfare of humankind, including the use of plant pathogens as biological weapons. Bioterrorism violates the fundamental principles expressed in the APS Code of Professional Conduct (<http://www.apsnet.org/about/governance/Documents/CodeofConduct.pdf>) and is abhorrent to the APS and its members.”

APS Publications Board Policy and Procedures

As described in the above Council resolution, the APS recognizes that there are valid concerns regarding the publication of information in scientific journals that could be put to inappropriate use. Members of the APS Publications Board will evaluate the rare manuscript that might raise such issues during the review process. Research articles must contain sufficient detail to permit the work to be repeated by others. By publishing in an APS journal, the authors agree that any fungi, bacteria, plasmids, viruses, and living materials, such as microbial strains and cell lines newly described in the article, are available from a national collection or will be made available in a timely fashion and at reasonable cost to members of the scientific community for non-commercial purposes. It is also expected that newly assigned GenBank/EMBL/DDBJ accession numbers for nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence data will be included in the original manuscript or be inserted when the manuscript is modified, and that the data will be released to the public by the time the manuscript is published. Supply of these materials must be in accordance with laws and regulations governing the shipment, transfer, possession, and use of biological materials and must be for legitimate, bona fide, research needs.

In order for the Publications Board to comply with the policy statement, ALL Editors of ALL APS journals should take the following course of action:

1. Ask ALL reviewers to advise the Senior Editor, by use of a confidential cover letter accompanying the review form, or an appropriate check-off box on the review form when

¹ Adapted with permission from the American Society for Microbiology (<http://www.asmsusa.org/>).

it becomes available, if, in their opinion, the manuscript under review describes misuses of plant pathology or of information derived from plant pathology research.

2. The Senior Editor should serve as an initial screen with regard to this matter and may be the point of contact with the author(s).
3. If a reviewer brings such a matter to a Senior Editor's attention, the Senior Editor should provide copies of the manuscript to the Editor-in-Chief, the Chair of the Publications Board, and the APS Director of Publications. The Senior Editor should hold the manuscript and all reviews until contacted by the Editor-in-Chief.
4. The Editor-in-Chief will contact the Chair of the Publications Board, and together they may render a decision or, at their discretion, consult the entire Publications Board to determine whether to resume the review process or to decline the manuscript and return it to the author.