Editorial

As the incoming Editor in Chief for *Molecular Plant Pathology* and with my transition currently in progress, it is an appropriate time to say a few words and formally introduce myself. I am delighted to have been named Editor in Chief of MPP and I appreciate the opportunity that accompanies this position. *Molecular Plant Pathology* accurately describes my interests and research passion for more than 30 years; since I was a fledgling surfer/graduate student in Hawaii, through a brief post-doc at Washington State University; then my first real paying job as an Assistant Professor at the University of Nebraska. Presently and for the past 6 years, I have been working at Texas A&M University where amongst other things, I am the Director of the Institute for Plant Genomics and Biotechnology at the Borlaug Center.

Having been a reviewer and author for MPP, it is evident that MPP is a user friendly operation. Being on the other side of this fence has only reinforced these impressions. First and foremost, I must gratefully acknowledge the efforts of Gary Foster who was Editor in Chief at the inception of MPP and who has led MPP to where it is today. Gary has left me with large shoes to fill and the bar for excellence has been set high. MPP has steadily moved forward under his reign, with increasing impact factors, currently standing at 3.899, an increase of 5% on the previous year.

A great deal of the success of MPP or any other journal for that matter, is the Editorial Office. Our office is run by Diane Hird, and for those of you who have had 'business' with Diane regarding manuscripts/reviews, you are undoubtedly aware of her outstanding qualities. She is the heart and soul of this operation and whether you are an author, reviewer, or editor, Diane provides expert and timely assistance. Her skill set translates into getting papers expeditiously through the peer review process. Thanks to our excellent group of Senior Editors and Editorial Board, the reviewing process is comprehensive and informed. While these

statements may appear to be the obligatory accolades that I should be making in this type of message (irrespective of validity!), in my limited time with the journal I do believe them to be true, and frankly the data (credentials and track record of the editors) speaks for itself.

We all know the importance of timeliness to authors; our average turnaround time from submission to decision is 26 days and from submission to acceptance is on average 35 days. Importantly we have NO PAGE CHARGES. A point of emphasis for me will be to continue to expedite the handling and movement of papers as quickly and as thoroughly as possible throughout the peer review process.

In my view, the journal is run very well. I base this statement on having dealt with numerous journals in several capacities over the years. Thus, I do not think it is wise or necessary to propose large-scale changes at this point.

Our Reviews, Technical Advances and Pathogen Profiles are established and popular. These features will continue, but we will also try some new approaches, emphasizing the broader definitions of molecular plant pathology with submissions/reviews that may lie outside its traditional boundaries. I think it is healthy to step outside of the box now and then. Moreover we may draw in people who do not normally read or submit papers to MPP.

We will also avail ourselves of the advances in social media and explore the use of on-line commentaries and discussions on selected issues.

It is an exciting time for the field of molecular plant pathology and for the journal itself.

If you have suggestions or comments please feel free to contact me.

Marty Dickman
Editor in Chief