

## Advancing *Scientia Agricola*: a new phase toward integration, quality, and global relevance

Since its establishment, *Scientia Agricola* has played an important role in disseminating scientific knowledge in agricultural sciences, consolidating itself as a respected journal within Brazil and internationally. Over the past decades, the journal has contributed to advancing research across a wide range of disciplines, reflecting the diversity and strength of agricultural science.

As of December 1st, 2025, I have had the honor of assuming the position of Editor-in-Chief of *Scientia Agricola*. Since then, together with the editorial and administrative teams, we have initiated a process of reflection and transformation aimed at strengthening the journal's scientific identity, editorial efficiency, and international positioning.

This initiative is grounded in a careful evaluation of the journal's recent trajectory, including submission patterns, thematic distribution, and editorial workflows. Throughout its history, *Scientia Agricola* has periodically evolved to meet emerging scientific and editorial challenges, from its transition to an international English-language journal to the adoption of modern submission systems and editorial structures.

As highlighted in our internal assessment, the current structure - historically organized into multiple fragmented areas - no longer fully reflects the integrated and interdisciplinary nature of modern agricultural science (Robinson et al., 2024; Hoffmann et al., 2025).

### From fragmentation to integration

One of the central steps in this transformation is the restructuring of the journal's thematic organization. The previous model, based on numerous narrowly defined sections, often resulted in conceptual overlap, low-density areas, and challenges in editorial management.

To address this, *Scientia Agricola* will transition to a more integrated framework, structured around seven broad and interconnected domains:

- Agro-Environmental Systems & Climate Resilience
- Animal Production and Integrated Livestock Systems
- Biosystems Engineering & Digital Agriculture
- Crop Science & Plant Breeding
- Food Technology and Security
- Plant Protection and Health
- Soils and Plant Nutrition & Agricultural Microbiome

This new structure reflects a systems-based perspective, aligning the journal with contemporary

scientific approaches that integrate processes across scales, from molecular mechanisms to agroecosystem dynamics.

### Strengthening scientific rigor and editorial efficiency

In parallel with the thematic restructuring, we are implementing measures to enhance editorial efficiency and ensure rigorous evaluation standards.

The editorial workflow is being optimized to reduce processing times and improve decision-making consistency, an issue also recognized in other journals undergoing similar transitions. The Associate Editor structure will become more flexible and responsive to submission demand, allowing better alignment between expertise and manuscript content.

At the same time, the journal will reinforce its commitment to publishing research that demonstrates:

- clear scientific advances,
- methodological robustness, and
- relevance to sustainable agricultural systems.

Descriptive or incremental contributions without strong analytical or conceptual advancement will be progressively deprioritized. In addition, *Scientia Agricola* reaffirms its commitment to Open Access and is progressively aligning with the principles of Open Science. In this context, open access is understood not only as free availability of scientific content, but as part of a broader commitment to transparency, reproducibility, and integrity in scientific research - principles that are increasingly emphasized by major international publishers and indexing platforms.

### Positioning in a rapidly evolving scientific landscape

In parallel, *Scientia Agricola* is fully aligned with ongoing efforts to strengthen the international visibility and impact of Brazilian science. In the context of national evaluation frameworks such as CAPES (*Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior*), the journal recognizes its responsibility in contributing to the qualification and global competitiveness of graduate programs. By enhancing editorial standards, increasing selectivity, and attracting high-quality international submissions, *Scientia Agricola* aims to improve its impact metrics while maintaining scientific integrity and relevance. This strategy also includes fostering international

collaborations, expanding the diversity of the editorial board, and promoting the journal as a competitive venue for cutting-edge research within the global scientific community.

Agricultural science is undergoing profound transformation, driven by global challenges such as climate change, food and energy security, resource scarcity, and the digitalization of production systems (Garnett et al., 2013; Rockström et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2024; Hoffmann et al., 2025). In this context, *Scientia Agricola* aims to position itself as an international journal focused on agro-environmental systems and sustainability, seeking to:

- promotes integrative and interdisciplinary research,
- supports advances in climate-resilient agriculture,
- fosters innovation in digital and precision agriculture, and
- contributes to sustainable food systems.

We also recognize the growing role of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, in shaping scientific communication and knowledge dissemination. Ensuring that these advances are incorporated responsibly, while preserving scientific integrity will remain a central component of our editorial commitment.

### Community, collaboration, and responsibility

The success of *Scientia Agricola* depends fundamentally on its scientific community - authors, reviewers, Associate Editors, and readers. Recent national initiatives aimed at strengthening peer-review systems, such as those led by the Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology (IBICT), including the development of a national directory of scientific reviewers, further highlight the growing recognition of evaluation as a critical pillar of scientific quality and integrity.

We are deeply grateful for the continued support and engagement of our editorial board and collaborators. Their expertise and dedication are essential for maintaining the quality and credibility of the journal.

José Lavres   
Editor-in-Chief

We also encourage members of the Editorial Advisory Board and the broader community to actively contribute to the journal, whether through high-quality submissions, constructive peer review, or by citing relevant work published in *Scientia Agricola*, thereby strengthening its visibility and impact.

### Looking ahead

The changes currently being implemented mark the beginning of a new phase for *Scientia Agricola*. Our goal is not only to modernize the journal's structure, but also to consolidate its role as a reliable, relevant, and internationally recognized platform for agricultural science.

We are confident that these efforts will lead to:

- improved manuscript quality,
- greater thematic coherence,
- enhanced international visibility, and
- stronger citation performance.

We view impact not only as a metric, but also as a reflection of scientific relevance and global engagement. We invite the scientific community to be part of this transformation.

### References

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