

The Most Outstanding—Recognizing Achievements through ASHS Publication Awards: A Brief History of Publications and an Introduction to Publication Awards

Curt R. Rom¹

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ABSTRACT. The American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) has since its inception published annual serial monographs or journals to achieve its mission of communicating horticultural science. To recognize the accomplishments of the membership, a series of professional awards was created. After the individual awards, the ASHS created publication awards. This paper, and the papers that follow, document the publication awards of the ASHS. The papers were based on presentations at the 2023 annual conference and serve as additional recognition of the contributions of member authors and as a historical record of achievements of the ASHS.

The American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) was established in 1903 and in 2023 celebrated its 120th anniversary. At the annual conference, a series of presentations was made highlighting the award-receiving publications within ASHS serial publications. This introductory paper presents a brief history of ASHS publications and publication awards. The papers that follow present an overview of the ASHS publication awards.

To put the publication awards into context and perspective, it is useful to know the history of ASHS publications. The ASHS was organized as the Society for Horticultural Science (SHS) on 9 Sep 1903, in Boston at the 28th Biennial meeting of the American Pomological Society. At that

organizational meeting (SHS 1903a), it was stated that

The object of the Society is strengthening Horticultural investigation and teaching on its scientific side and the aiding in the development of horticulture as a science.

and further,

Announcement cannot be made at this time as to the Society's affiliation or the publication of its proceedings, other than these matters are under consideration.

The first annual meeting of the SHS was held 28–29 Dec 1903 in the Central High School Building, St Louis, MO, USA, in connection with the 53rd annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. At that time, the attending new members approved a constitution and by-laws, and presented papers. Within the constitution (SHS 1903b) it stated,

Article 2. The object of the Society shall be to promote the science of horticulture.

At the first meeting, the papers presented and published included “The Mangosteen, Queen of the Tropical Fruits,” “The Physiological Effects of Shading Plants,” “Effect of Shading on Pineapples and Citrus Fruits,” “A few Facts Obtained by Growing Vegetables in a Cheesecloth Enclosure,” “An Experiment on Shading Strawberries,” “Seed Selection According to Specific Gravity” and “Grape Breeding: Size, Weight and Specific Gravity of the Seed

Correlated with the Germination and Vigor of the Seedling.” The presenters were from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Missouri, FL, Ottawa [Can], and New York (SHS 1903c).

At the first meetings, the executive committee discussed publishing the proceedings. The USDA volunteered to publish the proceedings of the first two meetings; however, apparently that was not accepted (Beach 1903). The proceedings of the meetings were first published with volumes 1 (1903) and 2 (1904) titled the *Proceedings of the Society for Horticultural Science* (PSHS) being included in one binding published in 1905 by Secretary Beach, in Geneva, New York (SHS 1905a). The founding officers saw the need for publishing the papers presented at the annual meetings as was the practice of other scientific societies and in-keeping with the constitutional objective of the SHS. By 1905, the SHS had created a standing Periodical Publishing Committee with Bailey serving as chair (SHS 1905b). In 1916, the SHS changed its name to the American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) and accordingly changed the publication name to the *Proceedings of the ASHS* (ASHS 1916).

The proceedings were published annually in a single serial volume. Beginning in 1941, because of the expansion of horticulture programs in the United States, increasing research submissions, and presumed growing ASHS membership and participation, two volumes were published annually. Although the ASHS did not meet during the war-years of 1942–43, the *Proceedings* continued annual publication. Three volumes were published in 1962. Proceedings of the annual meeting were published continuously until 1968 with no interruptions by wars or recessions.

At the 63rd annual meeting (ASHS 1966), the By-Laws were amended to read as follows:

Article 1, Section 1. The purposes of the American Society for Horticultural Science are to promote and encourage national and international interest in scientific research and education in horticulture.

and

(b) the dissemination of horticultural knowledge through the publication of the Proceedings of the American Society for Horticultural Science and other publications.

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¹Department of Horticulture, PTSC 316, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701, USA

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25 Years of Publication Excellence Awards for ASHS Journals.

C.R.R. is the corresponding author. E-mail: crom@uark.edu.

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As the pace of horticulture research increased and ASHS membership continued to grow, discussions began in the early 1960s to develop an additional publication with a magazine-like journal format similar to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, *Science* journal. According to Dr. R.E. Larsen (1965), the 1964 president, “the membership has also requested a quarterly publication in addition to the Proceedings,” which was approved by the membership in 1964 and given the name *HortScience*. Because of a “vital need for other more frequent forms of communication between and among horticultural scientists and educators,” (Carew 1966) the new serial publication, *HortScience* started in 1966. From 1966 to 1969, *HortScience* was published quarterly in four issues. Beginning in 1970, publishing was expanded to bimonthly with a supplement of abstracts from the annual conference. Beginning in 1990, *HortScience* was published in 12 issues per annual volume, which continued until 1995–2009 when it returned to seven issues per volume. Beginning in 2010, 12 issues per annual volume and a supplement of conference abstracts were published (ASHS 2023a).

With a proliferation of presented papers at the annual meetings and contributed papers, the success of *HortScience*, and a concern the name *Proceedings* did not reflect papers submitted beyond being presented at the conference, the biennial publication of the *Proceedings* was discontinued and beginning in 1969, the new serial *Journal of the American Society for Horticultural Science* (JASHS) was begun. The 1969 JASHS continued the volume numbers of the PASHS with volume 94, issue 1 published in Jan 1969. JASHS was published bimonthly (ASHS 2023b).

Some uncertainty differentiating the content of JASHS and *HortScience* has been apparent several times during the past several decades. This has been clarified in the current description of the publications.

For *HortScience*,

The research studies published in HortScience are limited to advances in knowledge derived from high-value specialty crops and their components or products. HortScience seeks to publish the results of problem-solving research, typically conducted on a small-scale basis, in

controlled environments or in limited trials. Generally, the results are not considered ready for direct utilization by practitioners, without additional evaluation efforts in larger-scale development trials. HortScience also publishes Cultivar and Germplasm Releases (ASHS 2023c).

In other words, *HortScience* publishes work that is crop or discipline specific, mission focused and generally of an applied nature, or methodological in its approach to solving a production problem.

For JASHS (ASHS 2023d),

The primary mission is to publish accurate, clear, reproducible, and unbiased articles in the field of fundamental horticultural science. JASHS seeks to advance selected papers in horticultural science encompassing original discovery through analysis, compilation, formulation, and synthesis of concepts, data, ideas, observations, and theories formulated with the primary goal of answering a question.

Scientific queries published in JASHS are limited to advances in knowledge associated with high-value specialty crop species and their components or products. The research published in JASHS is usually undertaken without a specific product being considered, developed, or tested. The resulting contribution of knowledge is generally not yet ready for any practical application; however, it may be a prerequisite for subsequent problem solving or product development efforts.

JASHS currently focuses on more fundamental, basic, developmental, or theoretical horticultural and plant science research that adds to the general knowledge of economic plant growth, development, and production.

With continued development and expansion of scholastic and academic horticulture, information gaps were seen between these two publications: applied technologies, extension communications and programs, and teaching. In 1991, with a recommendation from the membership and Publication Committee, a new publication was begun, *HortTechnology*. The first volume in 1991 was only one issue but beginning in 1992 and continuing through 2009 it was published quarterly. Beginning in 2010 publication became bimonthly (ASHS 2023e).

HortTechnology has differentiated its mission and audience from *HortScience* and JASHS (ASHS 2023f).

HortTechnology seeks to advance selected peer-reviewed papers derived from topics in practical horticultural investigations

with the primary goal of improving capabilities of horticultural practitioners and students, or recommending best practices for horticultural operations, or advancing knowledge concerning the intrinsic social benefits associated with the intersection of humanity and horticulture.

The research investigations published in HortTechnology are limited to advances in knowledge derived from or associated with high-value specialty crops and their components or products. HortTechnology seeks to publish the results of comparative and evaluation research, typically conducted in real-world applications, and/or in classroom, field, or greenhouse environments on a large enough scale to support recommendations to practitioners. Generally, the results are ready for direct utilization by educators, growers, practitioners, and technical advisors.

Since 2008, the ASHS has published 24 peer-reviewed periodicals annually. From the onset of the publications in 1905 until 2020, the publications were considered a benefit of membership or through subscription. In 2018, President C. Sams in his “Reflections” column stated that “our society should move toward Open Access Publications as soon as possible” to increase both the visibility of the research and the use of published research (Sams 2018). In the “information age” and to further meet the constitutional objective of the Society, beginning in 2019, *HortTechnology* became open access (ASHS 2023g) and President Cole announced that *HortScience* and JASHS would become open access in 2020 (Cole 2019).

The ASHS developed programs to recognize outstanding contributions of its membership beginning with the recognition of Fellows beginning in 1965 (ASHS 2023h) and has recognized more than 540 members (ASHS 2023i). Additional awards were established in 1985 to recognize the outstanding Researcher, Extension Educator, Graduate Educator, and Undergraduate Educator (ASHS 2023j). In 1990, an award for the outstanding Industry Scientist was added and in 1997 an award to recognize the outstanding International Horticulturist. More recently awards were developed to recognize outstanding Leadership and Administration (2019) and Early Career Awards (2020).

Publication awards were established by the Board of Directors as part of the awards program and to recognize scholarship with publication in ASHS periodicals (ASHS 2023j). The awards for the “most outstanding” Fruit, Vegetable, Ornamental/Floriculture, and Cross-Commodity publication awards were created in 1986. With the publication of *HortTechnology* with special sections dedicated to Extension Education and Teaching, an Extension publication award was created in 1997, and a Teaching/Education award was added in 1998, again recognizing the “most outstanding” publication in ASHS periodicals. The objective of the awards is to recognize and honor ASHS members for papers published in the ASHS serial publications. The awards state that a committee of five plus alternates president appointed ASHS members should review all papers in the award discipline area on the basis of originality, clarity and conciseness, and advancement of knowledge of the subject. [Currently the Screening Committees for Publication Awards have eight to nine committee members with rotating 3-year terms (ASHS 2023k)]. Of the selected papers, at least one of the authors must be an ASHS member in the year of publication and award. The awards are presented annually at the annual conference and recognized with a certificate.

The following papers are a review and evaluation of the award-receiving papers as recognized by ASHS peers and published in ASHS serial publications. This collection is meant to further recognize the contributions of members to the varied academic and discipline fields of horticulture, and to encourage addition scholastic endeavors and excellence in publication. These papers will provide a historical record of the contributions made by

ASHS members to “promote the science of horticulture.”

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