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Remove Personal Information for Review & Quicker Review Results!

Abstract: *"Remove Personal Information for Review & Quicker Review Results!" discusses the paramount importance of removing personal information from submission files, gives instructions for doing so, and announces that, starting in 2009, authors are going to be receiving review results electronically. "February Issue Heads Up" points to the redesign we're rolling out with the February 2009 issue. "Keyword Offer" repeats an offer I've made before. "December JOE" highlights, among other great articles, the Commentary on "Extension's Response to the Housing Crisis" and anticipates more submissions on ways you're responding to help our clients through the current financial crisis.*

Remove Personal Information for Review & Quicker Review Results!

As a refereed journal, the *Journal of Extension (JOE)* uses double-blind review for Feature, Research in Brief, and Ideas at Work submissions. That means that reviewers cannot know who has written the articles they are reviewing, and authors cannot know who has reviewed their articles.

That further means that all traces of personal information must be removed from submission files at every stage of the process. This is getting trickier and trickier to accomplish as word-processing systems like Word (*JOE's* preferred system) do more and more for us—whether we want them to or not.

How do you remove personal information from submission files?

If you are on a Mac, as I am, and use Word 2004 or 2008, do the following:

From the menu, choose Word, then Preferences, and then Security. Check the box under the privacy options that says "Remove personal information from this file on save." Click "OK." Then Save the file.

If you are on a PC, you can find instructions for removing personal information from files in Word 2003 at <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word/HP051901021033.aspx> and for Word 2007 at <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/HA100375931033.aspx#3>.

I am asking all authors of new submissions to remove personal information from their files before they submit their articles. The **exception** is the author information that is required in the file after an article's title (name, position, department or unit, institution, city/town and state of institution, and e-mail address). I need that information for tracking purposes, and it's easy to see and remove before I send submissions to reviewers. (Some authors include headers or footers containing their surnames, and that is obviously always

a mistake—and one I might not catch.)

We'll add these instructions to the *JOE* Submission Guidelines soon.

I'll also ask *JOE* reviewers to follow these steps after they have reviewed submissions and before they send them to me. And, before I send authors their reviews, I'll follow them myself as a fail-safe (sigh).

Why am I issuing these instructions "all of a sudden"?

When I started as *JOE* editor in 2000, something over half of *JOE* reviewers reviewed their submissions "manually," that is, they printed out the review forms and submissions, made comments in the hard copy, and mailed the submissions and hard copy to me through the USPS. That meant sending hard copy of reviews to authors, also through the USPS.

That cost paper—and time, and it's become pretty unnecessary because the vast majority of reviews now review electronically.

Starting with the submissions I will be sending out for review this week (or next), I will expect all reviewers to review electronically, and I will e-mail authors their review results.

It's about time, huh?

February Issue Heads Up

Take a last look at the December issue and the rest of the *JOE* site. Things will look different (and better) come February. We're rolling out a redesign with the February 2009 issue of *JOE*. Expect a site that's cleaner and easier to navigate. We're excited!

Keyword Offer

In my August Editor's Page, I explained that *JOE* was going to start using keywords to enhance its search capability and said the following.

Corresponding authors who have an article that has already been accepted for publication in *JOE* but that has **not yet been published** can send me a list of no more than five keywords or key phrases--**along with the article's submission number and article category**--and I will add that list to the article. It has to be the corresponding author, and I need the submission number and category so that I can locate the article.

If you are the corresponding author of an article that has been accepted but not yet published, this an offer you shouldn't refuse.

I believe only four authors have taken me up on my offer. It still stands.

December *JOE*

The December Commentary, "[Extension's Response to the Housing Crisis](#)," couldn't be more timely—as was the October issue's "[The Need for Predatory Mortgage Education: Expert Views](#)."

It's time once again for Extension to step up to the plate. I'd love to get Tools of the Trade submissions on quick and effective ways you're responding to help our clients through the current financial crisis, and I expect Features and Research in Brief and Ideas at Work submissions when you've had time to evaluate your efforts.

As usual, all of the articles in this issue are both good and illuminating. I'm calling particular attention to the first three Research in Brief articles, "Short-Cut Estimates for Annual Hog CAFO Production: Relationship Between Hog CAFO Inventory and the Annual Production," "Marketing Local Foods to Gourmet Restaurants: A Multi-Method Assessment," and "Using Focus Groups to Evaluate Youth Development Program Direction," for their emphasis on methods and methodology.

Again as usual, I wish I had the time and space to highlight some of the other excellent articles, but I've already gone on for more than 700 words, and I still have to say:

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season.

Laura Hoelscher, Editor
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This article is online at <http://www.joe.org/joe/2008december/ed1.shtml>.

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