

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I should like to begin with an apology for the inordinate and unacceptable delay in producing and distributing the present volume of the PNL. Members have every right to want and expect more timely receipt of this, your publication. The reason for the delay is enmeshed in a larger set of recent developments which affect the Pisum Genetics Association.

It is pertinent at the outset to repeat a point made on several previous occasions: no small part of the cost of producing the PNL at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station over the years has been borne by the department to which the Editor, "clerk", and secretaries belong. Since the founding of the PGA in 1969 two departmental mergers have occurred, both designed to enhance departmental efficiency and reduce administrative expense in the wake of mounting operational costs and restricted support. The PGA is caught up in this struggle and, sparing the reader all of the detail, the reality is that the department will no longer be able to subsidize the publication of the PNL by making up the difference between the revenues and actual costs. We must, in short, become self-supporting.

For convenience, I shall characterize PGA expenditures as direct and indirect, the latter being expressed as the costs of labor which have heretofore been absorbed by the department. Our current yearly direct costs are roughly as follows:

Printing - \$350

Postage - \$250

Miscellaneous (including bank charges and reprinting out-of-print volumes) - \$250.

Indirect costs include the time required for various bookkeeping duties associated with collecting, posting, and depositing of membership dues as well as executing correspondence related to these activities. However, the time required to type and retype all edited material represents the most significant indirect cost. In some instances the articles undergo 3-4 cycles of retyping. Preparation of tables is especially time-consuming. Preparation of the finished manuscripts and assembling them prior to printing is estimated to involve about three weeks of secretarial time. The bookkeeping activities are estimated to require 3-5 days. Thus, the cost of about one month's secretarial time is currently absorbed by the department.

Of course, at present the time devoted by Mrs. VanKirk, our "clerk", and Mrs. Porterfield, our typist, to PGA affairs is not concentrated into a single period, but instead must be fitted in as time permits with their primary departmental duties. Therein lies the reason for the delay in producing the PNL. A reduction in our secretarial force together with a greater work load have severely limited the time the aforementioned can devote to PGA affairs.

Revenues at present derive from two sources: (1) member dues and (2) a gift from the National Pea Improvement Association (a U.S. organization representing public and private researchers and private industry, e.g. seed firms, processing firms, suppliers, etc.). Dues generate approximately \$600 yearly and the NPIA contribution amounts to \$250, for a total of approximately \$850-\$900. All of our income is used to meet the direct costs mentioned above, leaving the indirect labor costs which now must be met by our organization. The latter are estimated to range from \$1000 to \$1500 per year.

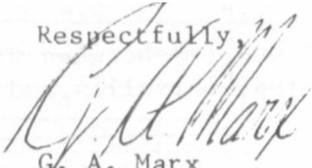
To become self-supporting, I propose the following courses of action:

(1) Increase dues from the current \$3.00 per year to \$10.00 for two years. The annual rate, of course, will be \$5.00 but the amount is couched so as to encourage members to pay their dues for two years rather than one as a way of reducing handling costs. However, given our small membership, even the substantial increase in dues from \$3.00 to \$5.00 will not generate the revenue needed to survive. Nor does it seem prudent or advisable, for a number of reasons, to increase dues beyond \$5.00.

(2) Seek out benefactors or sponsors willing to contribute sums ranging from \$200 to \$500 on a continuing basis. Inevitably, private industry is considered the leading candidate to approach for support. However, this potential source already is beleaguered with requests of this type and patience may be running thin. Moreover, industry may not perceive our activities to be of sufficient benefit to warrant its participation. Still, our fortunes seem to rely on identifying one or several companies or agencies to provide the funds required to sustain our organization.

Our future is at stake. I call upon members to help find ways to solve the problem and ensure our survival. Financial independence will allow us to devote full time to the task of producing each volume of the PNL and should permit timely completion and delivery.

Respectfully,



G. A. Marx
Editor