



## Editorial

# Toward sustainability—reducing the environmental impact of your journals

Dear members and readers,

As readers of *JAVMA* in print, you might have noticed a change in the journal's paper, starting with the March 15, 2022, issue—and Covid was only partly responsible for that abrupt change! Before the pandemic, many paper mills were closing or operating at limited capacity due to a falling demand for paper. Add into the mix labor shortages, rising costs of wood pulp, supply chain issues, changes in import/export rules, rising transportation costs, and other constraints of the Covid pandemic, including a 4-month strike at our paper mill in Finland—and we had a perfect storm.

The paper we used in the March 15, 2022, issue was, in fact, the only paper we could source for your *JAVMA*. To be honest, I hadn't been curious enough until then to think about *JAVMA* and *AJVR* production from soil and sapling to issue shipping. Since then, we have worked closely with our printer and distributor, Sheridan, to optimize the print quality of *JAVMA* while minimizing the environmental impact of your journals.

This month, I want to tell you about the steps we have already taken to reduce the journals' impact on the environment, an issue which many of you have raised. As you probably know, many of the manufacturing processes used in printing and distributing journals traditionally contributed to the release of greenhouse gases into the environment. For many years, paper manufacturers and printers have been devising innovative ways to reduce the effects of these processes on the environment. Here are the green measures we've taken to reduce *JAVMA*'s and *AJVR*'s environmental impact while ensuring their sustainability:

- Starting with the June 2023 issue of *JAVMA*, all mailing bags will be made from sustainably sourced and recyclable paper—no more plastic for your journals! Fun fact: we are required by the US Postal Service to use polybags when mailing a Supplemental Issue with a monthly issue of *JAVMA* or when there is a cover tip on the cover. We had already strategically decreased the use of plastic polybags to twice a year for the Supplemental Issues, but using paper mailing bags as we move forward allows us greater adherence to best publishing practices.

- In 2022, *JAVMA* moved to 12 issues/year plus 2 themed Supplemental Issues instead of 24 semimonthly issues, reducing our consumption of production resources by 25%. Some content has moved to online-only publication, again reducing the journal's need for chemical-based resources and energy-intense manufacturing processes.
- For *JAVMA*, printing paper and paper mailing bag stock are at the center of our operation and we are committed to working only with environmentally responsible suppliers. The paper we use is no longer glossy, and images are a bit duller than before—but you can always view high-resolution images on the website. Here are the sustainability facts that apply to our journal paper and paper mailers:
  - Our paper is manufactured by paper mills that are members of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), which endorses forest certification through the Programme for the endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). This guarantees that the paper we use is made from renewable, sustainable wood that is easy to recycle and creates minimal waste.
  - Our paper suppliers are Sustainable Forest Initiative (SFI) certified. This certification sets strict mandatory practices for companies to source wood from sustainably managed forests with a commitment to protect biodiversity, at-risk species, and wildlife and to promote sustainable harvest levels and conserve and protect water.
  - Chain-of-custody certification is used by our paper supplier to ensure oversight of their sustainability efforts.
  - The grade of paper in *JAVMA* was chosen by your Publications team to deliver high performance while using 50% less wood fiber than other paper types.
  - Our biorenewable ink contains organic pigments, renewable soy, and other vegetable oils.
  - Our suppliers are also committed to upholding indigenous people's rights through consultation with local stakeholders and ensuring that workers' rights are safeguarded.

- In our suppliers' manufacturing plants, use of highly hazardous chemicals and GMOs is prohibited.
- Our suppliers, vendors, and journal staff are committed to reducing their carbon footprint through reusing energy and resources, minimizing waste, and recycling whenever possible. Together, these efforts will help us protect ecologically important forest areas and promote biodiversity.
- What about *AJVR*? Last June, we converted it to a digital journal, online only, eliminating all paper, ink, printing, and mailing for 12 issues/year.

Sheridan, our printer/distributor, is also deeply committed to sustainability. In Q3 2022 alone, they recycled 12,164 tons of paper, saved 206,000 trees, avoided 40,000 cubic yards of landfill, saved over 85 million gallons of water and over 49 million kilowatts of electricity, and saved over 729,000 pounds of air pollutants!

We believe in optimizing digital communication and content, but are committed to preserving *JAVMA* in print as a tactile reminder to you, our valued members and subscribers, of what AVMA delivers—world-class information in an attractive, browsable package. As we continue to be watchful of our impact on the environment, we'll update you periodically on our initiatives that protect our beautiful natural world, and the animals and people that live here.

As always, I welcome your comments and questions—[lfortier@avma.org](mailto:lfortier@avma.org). And please, remember to recycle!

Respectfully,

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