Editorial

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This issue marks the beginning of the 20th year for JNIRS—Journal of Near Infrared Spectroscopy. In 1993 JNIRS was born with the publication of Volume 1 Issue 1, which carried six papers and an editorial by our Founding Editor, Mr A.M.C. [Tony] Davies.

Since that humble beginning, JNIRS has published approaching 800 papers which utilise or relate to aspects of the near infrared region of the electromagnetic spectrum. The papers have covered a very wide range of subjects including agriculture, archaeology, beverages, botany, biodigestion, chemistry, chemometrics, cosmetics, environment, industrial processing, food, medical, minerals, pharmaceutical, petrochemicals, polymers, soils, textiles and wood.

During the last 20 years NIR spectroscopy has been more widely accepted as an analytical technology because it offers several attractive advantages, such as being highly reliable and accurate, needing no or minimal sample preparation, as well as speed and low cost.

I am indebted to the many authors who have submitted papers to the previous 19 volumes of JNIRS. Some of the authors writing papers today were authors of papers in that first issue. Throughout the life of JNIRS we have maintained stringent reviewing standards. The quality of the papers is due to the dedicated work by my fellow Editors and members of the Editorial Advisory Board, and those who have contributed by peer-reviewing of papers.

It is interesting to see the range of topics of the most highly cited papers which have appeared in JNIRS. The most cited papers are:


The appearance of JNIRS has evolved: we moved from four to six issues per volume with Volume 11 in 2003; and to an A4 format with Volume 12 in 2004 when I was appointed Editor-in-Chief. JNIRS has published special issues in the past. The first special issue in 1996, was in fact an entire Volume (Number 4) honouring the pioneering work of Dr Karl Norris who began to publish his NIR research in the 1950s. The NIR community is indebted to his on-going contributions in many ways to the science of NIR spectroscopy and to JNIRS.

The second special issue was published in 2006 as Volume 14 Issue 6 and was to honour the late Dr John Shenk. More recently, JNIRS has published special issues which are devoted to selected topics. These have included selected papers from the 13th International Conference on NIR Spectroscopy held in 2007 (Volume 16 Issue 3, 2008); papers on aquaphotomics (Volume 17 Issue 6, 2009); two issues on Wood and Wood Properties (Volume 18 Issue 6, 2010 and Volume 19 Issue 5, 2011). In this anniversary volume 20 we will be publishing two more special issues—one on medical applications of NIR spectroscopy and another on imaging using NIR spectra.

The papers published in JNIRS are ample evidence that the NIR region of the spectrum can be used to gain information...
which is of benefit to mankind and the environment—a view which few spectroscopists held 20 years ago.

As with any analytical technique the accuracy and the precision of the technique must be appreciated in relation to the problem to which they are applied. Many who conduct research using NIR spectroscopy have demonstrated the potential of the NIR technique as an analytical tool. There are many applications for which NIR spectra can provide information faster and at a lower cost, and sometimes information which is not attainable by any other technique. The challenge being put to many managers is to embrace this “not so new” technology called NIR spectroscopy and start reaping the benefits it offers.

The future for JNIRS and the field of NIR spectroscopy is a bright one and I look forward to seeing its development further as we assemble volume 20 and beyond.

References