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Foreword

According to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2019 has been the second hottest year on record for Earth (NOAA, 2020). This did not come as a huge surprise, as it was an almost perfect continuation of the current global trend. Each and every of the 23 years from 1997-2019 made it into a list of the hottest 23 years for the planet since the beginning of temperature recording, but most likely for far longer than that. Global warming has severe implications for humans, animals and plants alike. Droughts, severe weather, lower groundwater levels, loss of arable land as well as an increased diversity of pests and fungi challenge our agricultural systems. An interesting case study about the impact of seasonal weather variation on mycotoxins can be found in this very issue (Camardo Leggeri *et al.*, 2020). The scientists publishing in the *World Mycotoxin Journal* all made their own small contribution to increase food and feed safety by understanding the formation of mycotoxins, by finding novel ways to determine them or their toxicity and by providing science-based solutions, which might help to minimise the problem.

In that spirit, it is a pleasure for me to announce that the winner of the editorial board election for the *World Mycotoxin Journal* Best Paper Award 2019 is John Pitt (photo) for his open-access article 'The pros and cons of using biocontrol by competitive exclusion as a means for reducing aflatoxin in maize in Africa' (Pitt, 2019). Dr. Pitt recently retired from CSIRO, the Australian government research agency, after 65 years (!) working for the Division of Food Research. He joined CSIRO in March 1954 as a Technical Assistant and simultaneously studied for a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. His early work was on the preservation of dried fruit, which led into his lifelong interest in mycological aspects of food spoilage. After returning to Australia from his PhD studies and a postdoctoral fellowship in the US, he and his long-time colleague, Dr. Ailsa Hocking, carried out pioneering work on methods for isolating and identifying foodborne fungi. Dr. Pitt is author, co-author, editor or co-editor of 20 books and 250 research papers and book chapters. His review article describes the recent success of aflatoxin biocontrol in Africa, but also describes in a critical way, which hurdles still needs to be overcome. The existing scientific knowledge is synthesised into well-informed conclusions that realistically convey the benefits of biocontrol in African maize. This sort of consideration is crucially needed in many corners of mycotoxin research, particularly when lots of funding has been devoted over the years. On behalf the Editorial Board, I would like to congratulate John for his fine article!



Speaking (well, writing actually) of the Editorial Board, we had some changes lately, which were announced during a meeting in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on the occasion of the World Mycotoxin Forum meets IUPAC 2019. After servicing the journal since its beginnings as author, reviewer, editor and section editor, Gordon Shephard has retired from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and the board of editors. Gordon, your dedication to research, your analytical mind and your pleasant manners will be dearly missed. Thank you for very much for

all your support for our journal over all these years and all the best for your retirement. At the same time, the editorial board considers itself lucky to welcome yet another scientist from South Africa, Belinda Janse van Rensburg, into its ranks. Belinda already acted very successfully as one of the guest editors for the 2018 special issue 'Mycotoxins in Africa'. Likewise, we welcome Sheryl Tittlemier from the Canadian Grain Commission on the Editorial Board. Sheryl contributed greatly to the success of the journal both as regular reviewer and author, including our annual method review (see below). Finally, we are happy to announce that Marthe de Boevre has already started working on for new position as section editor for 'human health'. Marthe is working at Ghent University, Belgium, and coordinating Mytox-South, aiming to strengthen the capacity of partners in Africa and Argentina to mitigate mycotoxins. Good luck and many interesting submissions!

At the World Mycotoxin Forum meets IUPAC 2019, the number one answer learned was that social media

have become important discussion forums. *World Mycotoxin Journal* is in the process of adding a 'social media editor' to our list of Editorial Board members, to strengthen the community. You can find *World Mycotoxin Journal* on Twitter: @WorldMycotoxinJ, Facebook: @WorldMycotoxinJ, and LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/world-mycotoxin-journal/>. If you are active on social media, we hope to see you there. The *World Mycotoxin Journal* is also proud media partner of several scientific conferences. The most relevant upcoming ones are the 3rd African Symposium on Mycotoxicology in South Africa (September 2020) as well as the World Mycotoxin Forum meets Italy in Parma, which is currently scheduled for October 2021. We hope that many of our readers also have the opportunity to go to one of those conferences.

The issue at hand consists of nine articles, which we hope are of interest to many of you. As an analytical chemist myself, I am always keen to learn about advances in the determination of mycotoxins. If you are as well, I can really recommend you to read the annual method review, which is traditionally published as the first article each year and open-access (Tittlemier *et al.*, 2020). The article provides an excellent compilation of novel methods regarding the determination of aflatoxins, *Alternaria* toxins, ergot alkaloids, fumonisins, ochratoxin A, patulin, trichothecenes and zearalenone.

I am also happy to announce that our next issue this year will be the special issue 'Mycotoxins in China,' which is will provide a quite comprehensive overview of mycotoxins and mycotoxin research in China. I am tremendously grateful to Dr. Zhang Hao, Prof. Zhang Qi and Dr. Chen Yisheng for their efforts to coordinate the special issue as Guest Editors and they should be proud on their achievements. Also 2021 will feature a special issue, focusing on a part of the world, this time Latin America. We already started the planning and nominated excellent guest editors. Should you be interested to contribute a research or review paper to

a specific topic for that issue, please contact the editorial office. After the China issue is published, you can also find more information, including submission deadlines, on our webpage.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all our authors for choosing *World Mycotoxin Journal* to convey your message to the public. Many scientists, most importantly our reviewers, editors and section editors work hard and voluntary to keep up with the high standards of scientific publishing and to further improve the quality of submitted manuscripts. Without your dedication and support, 'our' journal would not exist. Thank you very much and enjoy reading!

Franz Berthiller

Editor-in-chief

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