Organic Process Research & Development

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Editorial

A New Era Begins for Process Chemistry

A new era begins today for process chemistry, one of the most innovative areas of industrial organic chemistry and chemical engineering. The papers in this first issue of *Organic Process Research & Development* demonstrate the quality of science and engineering involved in devising a manufacturing process for a new or existing chemical, and in solving the problems of scale-up from laboratory to pilot plant and beyond. Much of this work would probably have remained unpublished without the launch of OPRD.

The new international journal has had a long (and sometimes painful) birth, resulting from ideas that I had developed after the success of the Society of Chemical Industry's Annual Process Development Symposia in the United Kingdom in the 1980s. Unknown to me, chemists in the United States were already having similar thoughts. However, it was not until a similar series of annual symposia, organised by a consortium of process groups from six pharmaceutical companies (Lilly, Abbott, Parke-Davis, Searle, Marion Merrell Dow and Upjohn), had been established in the midwest United States in the 1990s that a mechanism for realisation of these ideas became clear. The American Chemical Society became involved, and their market survey indicated a wide interest from industrial chemists. The ACS was willing to finance the project, and the Royal Society of Chemistry agreed to participate and share some of the financial "risk".

I was delighted to be appointed Editor in 1995 and to have John Arnett and Richard Pariza (who had been active in organising the midwest symposia) as Associate Editors. Our main task is to persuade process R&D chemists and engineers that publication of their results is important for the process R&D community, and that there is, as in all scientific disciplines, a need to interact and exchange ideas, both at symposia and in print. Only then can we advance the science and technology.

The Editors have the support of an enthusiastic and committed Editorial Board, mostly industrially based from a wide variety of backgrounds and countries. We do need your future support, however, and not just in keeping the circulation figures of OPRD high. We know of the excellent work being done in the organic process R&D community—the results are evident on a tonne scale—but we need a second product from you: information on record. Ideally, Full Papers with experimental details are to be the main format in OPRD, with Notes on shorter procedures which have been optimised and possibly scaled up being the second preference. In cases where the confidentiality is a problem, then a Lecture Transcript, without experimental details, may be an opportunity to present some information without giving commercial advantage to competitors.

Of vital concern are reports on the safety of chemical procedures, particularly where they relate to scale-up. I would encourage you to alert your colleagues of any process which gives rise to, or has the potential for, uncontrolled exotherms or runaway reactions. OPRD is the most useful forum for these reports, however brief, since it will be read by chemists and engineers involved in process R&D: your publication of such data may help to save injuries to others.

Finally, we would like to hear of new techniques that you are using (e.g., automation of process R&D, novel in-process monitoring techniques, etc.) and applications of recent technology to process work and scale-up.

We hope that you will enjoy reading this first issue and that it will encourage you to contribute to the Journal and to become a regular subscriber.

I cannot finish this first editorial without giving my thanks to all those who have made it possible: to the ACS and RSC for financial commitments; to my Associate Editors and the Editorial Board; to the management of the process R&D groups listed earlier for their continued support; and to those authors who have already contributed articles, both to this issue and to subsequent ones. The Journal has had a long history of efforts by numerous individuals at various stages of its development, but space precludes mentioning them all specifically in this editorial.

The Editors welcome further discussions with potential authors and readers, so please don't hesitate to contact us by phone, fax, letter or e-mail.

Trevor Laird
Editor

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