

□ Manuscript Preparation Guide for Research Articles

(HortiPlant Research — Author Instructions)

Research Articles present full-length original studies that offer significant advances in horticultural plant science. Manuscripts must demonstrate rigorous experimental design, methodological transparency, clear data interpretation, and adherence to the scientific IMRaD structure. Authors are required to follow the format and style guidelines below to ensure clarity, consistency, and high editorial standards.

Manuscripts that do not comply with these requirements may be returned to authors for correction prior to peer review.

1. General Formatting Requirements

- **File format:** Microsoft Word (.docx)
 - **Font:** Times New Roman, 12-point
 - **Line spacing:** Double-spaced throughout, including references, tables, and figure legends
 - **Margins:** 2.5 cm (1 inch) on all sides
 - **Page numbers:** Insert consecutively in the bottom-right corner
 - **Line numbering:** Continuous line numbering is required
 - **Language:** Clear, concise, grammatically correct English
 - **Spelling:** Consistent use of American English *or* British English
 - **Units:** Use SI units (e.g., m, L, kg, °C, $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{s}^{-1}$)
 - **File naming:** Use the format *LastName_ResearchArticle.docx*
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2. Article Limits and Required Components

Word limit

Up to **6,000 words**, excluding references, tables, figure legends, and supplementary material.

Abstract

Up to **300 words**.

Must summarize objectives, methods, key results, and conclusions.

No citations are allowed.

Keywords

Up to **6 keywords** using standardized scientific terminology.

Highlights

Up to **120 words**, ideally presented as **3–5 bullet points** summarizing the main contributions or key findings.

Placed after the abstract.

References

Up to **50 references**.

Figures and Tables

Up to **6 figures** and **6 tables** (combined or separately).

Additional items may be placed in supplementary materials.

Supplementary Material

Allowed (datasets, protocols, extended figures, tables, multimedia).

3. Manuscript Structure (Required Sections)

Research Articles must follow the **IMRaD** structure:

3.1 Title Page

Include:

- Full manuscript title
 - Running title (maximum 60 characters)
 - Full author names
 - Institutional affiliations (with superscript numbering)
 - Corresponding author(s) with email address
 - ORCID IDs (optional but encouraged)
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3.2 Abstract

A single paragraph summarizing:

- Study rationale
- Objectives
- Key methods
- Major findings
- Conclusions

No citations or statistical references.

3.3 Keywords

List up to 6 keywords after the abstract.

3.4 Highlights

Present 3–5 short bullet points (~120 words total) that capture the main insight or novelty of the work.

3.5 Introduction

Provide background, context, knowledge gaps, and objectives of the study. Clearly articulate the scientific problem and rationale.

3.6 Materials and Methods

Detail the experimental design, plant material, treatments, measurements, statistical methods, and analytical procedures.

Ensure reproducibility by including:

- Experimental conditions (light, temperature, humidity, media)
 - Equipment models and calibration details
 - Software versions
 - Statistical tests and criteria for significance
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3.7 Results

Present findings clearly and objectively, supported by figures and tables.
Avoid interpretation here (reserve for Discussion).
Use subheadings to improve readability.

3.8 Discussion

Interpret results, relate findings to existing literature, address implications, limitations, and future directions.

3.9 Acknowledgments

Acknowledge funding sources, institutional support, and individuals who contributed but do not qualify for authorship.

3.10 Author Contributions

Specify roles using the **CRediT taxonomy**, such as:

- Conceptualization
 - Methodology
 - Formal analysis
 - Investigation
 - Data curation
 - Writing—original draft
 - Writing—review and editing
 - Visualization
 - Supervision
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3.11 Data Availability Statement

Describe where the supporting data are available (repository names, DOIs).
For restricted data, explain limitations.

3.12 Conflict of Interest Statement

Declare any personal or financial interests that could influence the manuscript.

3.13 References

Use a consistent citation style (Harvard, APA, or Vancouver).
Ensure complete and accurate entries, including DOIs where available.

In-text examples (Harvard style):

- Single author: (*Heuvelink, 2020*)
- Two authors: (*Marcelis and Carvalho, 2018*)
- Three or more: (*Chen et al., 2022*)

4. Figures and Tables

4.1 In-text Placement

- Insert figures and tables at their **first mention** within the text
- Refer to them explicitly (e.g., “As shown in Figure 3...”)

4.2 Figures

- Minimum resolution: **300 dpi**
- Formats: .tif, .jpg, .png
- Include descriptive figure legends below each figure

4.3 Tables

- Prepare using Word table formatting (not images)
- Include titles and explanatory footnotes

5. Supplementary Information

Supplementary material may include:

- Additional figures/tables
- Expanded datasets
- Video clips
- Software code
- Detailed protocols
- Extended statistical analyses

Each item must be labeled (e.g., “Supplementary Figure S1”).

6. Style and Clarity Guidelines

- Write clearly, concisely, and scientifically
 - Avoid unnecessary jargon
 - Define specialized terminology at first mention
 - Use active voice where appropriate
 - Maintain consistent nomenclature
 - Italicize Latin binomials (e.g., *Capsicum annuum*)
 - Define all abbreviations at first use
 - Ensure units and symbols follow SI standards
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