

## Fact sheet no. 5: copyright considerations

(under revision)

There is a vivid international discussion on copyright issues in connection with the [open access movement](#). Organic Eprints does not want to infringe copyrights. We encourage giving open access where possible, but we also offer the possibility to restrict access. Access can be restricted to *registered users* at Organic Eprints, which is a limited and known, but rather large (> 15,000) group of people. Furthermore, access can be restricted to only *depositor and archive staff* (this includes the depositing user, archive administrator and editors, and - by special agreement - selected research evaluators for an organization).

Here are some resources that can help authors decide whether they should restrict access to the documents they deposit.

The RoMEO and SHERPA projects in the UK have made list of **publisher copyright policies** and eprints.org provides a useful search interface where you can also **search journal titles**.

<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/>  
<http://romeo.eprints.org/>

The Organic Eprints archive administrator has sent out a more detailed [inquiry of publishers policies](#) with particular regard to this archive. Not all publishers replied, but the [results of this inquiry](#) may also be useful.

Researchers have the original copyright to their own papers (except in some business-like employments). So the author can always give open access to her own original paper (the preprint, before review) on a website. She/he can also give open access to an accepted, peer reviewed version (a postprint), if copyright to this version has not been explicitly transferred to a publisher. But the published copy-edited version (reprint or offprint) of a paper will usually be copyright to the magazine, journal or publisher. If a researcher has transferred *all* copyrights to a publisher after the acceptance of a peer reviewed paper, she/he cannot give open access to the accepted version (postprint) or the published copy-edited version (reprint or offprint) in the archive without infringing copyrights. Some publishers do however permit open access to either postprints or reprints, and some permit giving access to colleagues at ones own institution.

In order to make more research freely available, authors can request that the right to online self-archiving is retained in any future transfers of copyrights, and research institutions and other actors can make a concerted effort to back up these requests. If the authors have already transferred copyrights, they may request the publisher that they get back the rights to e.g. deposit the postprint in an open access archive and put it on their own homepage. Some publishers have stated that they grant these rights as a standard procedure. We hope that the initiatives taken by Organic Eprints and other actors will spur the promotion of open access by reducing the problems with copyrights.

Depositing papers in an open access archive like Organic Eprints does not count as a prior publication with respect to journal publication. Some journals, for instance in the field of chemistry, have an 'embargo' submission policy stating that they will not accept papers for review that have been made publicly available on the internet. We have not yet found any journal that is relevant to research in organic agriculture, which enforces such a policy, but the question is part of the inquiry that we have sent out to a range of publishers.

**Other useful links**

Open access: <http://www.eprints.org/openaccess/self-faq/>

American Scientist: <http://users.ecs.soton.ac.uk/harnad/science.html>

Organic Eprints participates in an EU-project under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme called VOA3R:

In this project, work related to pre-print publishing and new peer-review processes is under development. The project aims at building a portal with access to several repositories related to agriculture and aquaculture and to combine this access with powerful search engines, commenting tools, and other features.

