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Book review

J. A. de Bokx (Ed.): *Viruses of potatoes and seed-potato production*. 232 pp., cloth bound with dust jacket, 8 colour plates, 66 figs., subject index. Centre for Agricultural Publishing and Documentation, Wageningen, the Netherlands, Price Dfl. 36.

In this book a number of experts have collected information on the growing of (seed) potatoes and their virus diseases.

Most of the data presented have been obtained from experience in the Netherlands. The book contains the following chapters: Introduction to plant virology; Graft and mechanical transmission; Aphids: their life cycles and their role as virus vectors; Soilborne viruses; Virus purification; Electron microscopy; Serology; Test plants; Histological, cytological and biochemical methods; Potato viruses: properties and symptoms; Virus translocation in potato plants and mature-plant resistance; Incidence of infection in commercial crops and consequent losses; Therapy; Control of aphid vectors in the Netherlands; Breeding for resistance; Dutch techniques of growing seed potatoes; Inspection and quality grading of seed potatoes. Descriptions of potato varieties mentioned in the chapters are given in a separate list before the subject index.

This handbook provides the reader with a wealth of information on potato virus diseases. One only wonders whether here and there the scope is too broad. The chapters on 'Introduction to plant virology', 'Electron microscopy' and 'Serology' would be more appropriate in a handbook on general plant virology than in one on potato virus diseases. A rather detailed description of the principle of the electron microscope and the different methods used in electron microscopy, for instance, seem out of place here (particularly as, in the chapter on purification, the principles of ultracentrifugation and density gradient centrifugation were not elaborated on). In these chapters and also in that on purification the number of references pertaining to potato viruses is very small so that it will not be easy for the reader to obtain additional information on the subject he is particularly interested in.

Very good contributions which exactly fit in the scope of this book are those on 'Aphids: their life cycles and their role as virus vectors', on 'Therapy', on 'Dutch techniques of growing seed potatoes' and on 'Inspection and quality grading of seed potatoes'.

As this is a publication from the Netherlands and also meant for the staff of inspection and plant protection services in this country, a list of Dutch synonyms of potato viruses would have been a welcome addition. In general the quality of the photographs is good. The text is carefully printed.

This book will certainly make its mark among those interested in both practical and fundamental aspects of potato virus diseases in relevance to potato production.

J. Dijkstra