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## Book review

J.H. Oudejans, 1982. *Agropesticides: their management and application. A manual for instructors of pesticide distributors, storekeepers and professional applicators.* U.N., Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok, Thailand. ISBN 974-8606-08-2. V + 205 pp. Price \$ 10,—

The book is available from: The ARSAP/FADINAP Project, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Building, Rajadamnern Avenue, Bangkok 2, Thailand. Bulk orders may receive discounts.

Working with pesticides is a risky activity in terms of pest control success, user and consumer safety, and cleanliness of the environment. This is rarely realized by small farmers in developing countries. Their unaware attitude is reflected by a discouraging amount of crop loss as well as casualties, intoxications and pollutions. The main cause is illiteracy and lack of information among the farmers. This makes pest control by many farmers in developing countries far from optimally effective.

The book written by Oudejans, aiming at minimizing these problems, is the product of the ARSAP (Agricultural Requisites Scheme for Asia and the Pacific) project in Bangkok, which has developed a training programme for instructors from nine South-East-Asian countries. In their own countries these instructors organize courses on the safe and effective use of pesticides. The national courses are intended for farm-level pesticide distributors as logical sources of information to farmers at the moments that these are in urgent need of both pesticides and advices for use.

In distinct chapters the book systematically covers practically every aspect of pesticide use in the tropics: principles of pest control, classification of pesticides, formulations and toxicity, symptoms and treatment of poisoning. Separate chapters are dedicated to the pesticide label, safety, storage and display in shops; transport, spills and disposal, spray equipment and maintenance, and spraying techniques. Safety is emphasized throughout, sometimes to a degree that would discourage any reader. Detailed information and advice is given in chapters on control of animal pests, plant diseases, weeds, storage pests and on marketing and shop keeping. Practical conversion tables facilitating the error-prone dosage calculations as well as a complete glossary are added. An index is lacking, however.

Each chapter covers the subject in a remarkably systematic, complete yet concise way. The vocabulary of the text assumes readers either to be schooled or to be assisted in studying; storekeepers and applicators would not easily understand the text without help. Reading is facilitated by many illustrative photographs, line drawings and examples, while many tables keep the subject succinct. The lack of contrast and sharpness in most photographs is compensated for by captions that add proper information to the text. The examples and cases given are especially illustrative to the S.E.-Asian reader.

Every chapter is readable as a separate entity, each containing an introduction, background information and references. Most references however contain insufficient details to find the report or book referred to, which precludes further reading. The pesticide information is sufficiently up-to-date, apart from the chapters on fungicides and disease control. According to the author, these chapters are being updated in the forthcoming edition.

Although the book concentrates on chemical pest control, other control methods are briefly described and advised as well. Integrated control is rarely mentioned after the first introduction, but a large body of information is offered which can be used fruitfully in introducing integrated control.

The book provides an excellent introduction to the practice of chemical pest control in the tropics. Its systematic completeness makes it most suitable as instruction literature to students in courses but also as a manual to solitary extension officers and field workers from agriculturalists to volunteers and missionaries. In its first year it proved a bestseller among the participants of the International Course on Plant Protection at Wageningen. The low price and high quality of the text will certainly help in reducing the risks of pesticide use by tropical farmers, a problem so well illustrated by the cover photograph, depicting a small farmer who is spraying his poor stand of tea with full dedication and a badly leaking knapsack sprayer.

P.A. Oomen