

Book review

I. Gylstorff (Ed.), 1985. Infektionen durch Mykoplasmatales. Band 21 in: Infektionskrankheiten und ihre Erreger. Eine Sammlung von Monographien. Begründet von R. Bieling, J. Kathe, W. Köhler, A. Mayr; herausgegeben von W. Köhler, A. Mayr, M. Truszczyński, 568 pages, 39 figures, 72 tables, ISSN 0537-5959, VEB Gustav Fisher Verlag, Jena. Hardback, DM 260.

This book is the result of a co-authorship involving over twenty authors. In particular the survey by J.M. Bové entitled 'Spiroplasma: neue, pflanzen- und tierpathogene Mykoplasmen' (37 pages), highlighting recent progress in the field of taxonomy and biochemistry of spiroplasmas is of interest to plant pathologists. The various techniques used, namely ELISA, polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis and DNA-DNA hybridisation are amply covered. The other chapters written in English or German contain, among others, reviews concerning fundamental biology, the biochemical and serological basis of taxonomy, contamination of cell cultures, as well as mycoplasmas pathogenic to man and domestic animals. Many of the articles were written as long ago as 1979. Unfortunately, most of these reviews have not been updated. Subsequent publications are merely mentioned in an appendix.

When writing the book, the authors were obviously aiming at readers in the fields of medicine and zoology. The inclusion of the spiroplasma review presents these readers with a unique opportunity to get a clear view of the results obtained to date with one of the key research areas in plant mycoplasma research. At the same time this book offers plant pathologists a worthwhile opportunity to become acquainted with recent developments in mycoplasma research in general.

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