

## Book review

**Principles and practice of managing soilborne plant pathogens.** Edited by R. Hall. 1996. 330 pp. APS-Press, St. Paul, Minnesota. Hardcover. Price \$39 (U.S.) and elsewhere \$49.

This book is the 7th in a series of well-known proceedings of international symposia on soilborne plant pathogens, held every 5 years, since 1963. The first and most famous is named 'Ecology of soil-borne plant pathogens – Prelude to biological control'. It was edited by K.F. Baker and W.C. Snyder and based on 'An International Symposium on Factors Determining the Behaviour of Plant Pathogens in Soil', held in 1963 at the University of California, Berkeley. The other six symposia were organized as part of the International Congresses of Plant Pathology.

Of the 14 chapters in this book, 13 are revised versions of 8 symposium papers and 5 keynote addresses presented at the 6th International Congress of Plant Pathology held at Montreal, 28 July–6 August 1993. Like the previous volumes, the book comprises many aspects of soilborne pathogens, but it is clearly less comprehensive and ambitious. The chapters are rather short and provide in most cases not an in depth analysis of the subject. Therefore, the book is well-suited for the plant pathologist desiring to get updated over the whole area. However, for the specialist most chapters of the book are not sufficiently challenging. Latest references included are of 1993 which makes the book already at the time of publication a little out of date.

In an interesting first chapter, Hornby looks back into history and compares his own past predic-

tions on developments in the science on soilborne plant pathogens with the current situation. Especially monitoring pathogen activity in soil has much less developed then expected. Hornby expresses concern that new technologies, notably molecular biology, causes loss of more traditional skills. Monitoring plant pathogens in soil is addressed by several authors. Van Vuurde and Postma present a clarifying conceptual overview of existing methods to detect plant pathogenic fungi and bacteria in soil. Campbell and Neher stress that improved sampling and detection techniques are necessary for further progress in root disease epidemiology. The chapter by Trudgill on including temperature in epidemiological models may inspire scientists to consider more in detail the biological implications of soil temperature dynamics.

The book is very well edited – I did not discover a single typing error. The mode of referring to publications by indicating numbers (as adopted by APS press) in stead of author name(s) and publication year makes reading arduous since one continuously is wondering whether the references are already known, or not. References take much space in the book and instead it would have been more efficient to accumulate them at the end of the book in a smaller font size. The book is indexed.

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