

Book review

Pseudomonas Syringae Pathovars and Related Pathogens. Edited by K. Rudolph, T.J. Burr, J.W. Mansfield, D. Stead, A. Vivian and J. von Kietzell. 1997. 700 pp. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, the Netherlands. Hardcover. Price NLG 490,00 / GBP 177,00.

Pseudomonas syringae pathovars and related pathogens are the causal agents of many important bacterial diseases of plants. In recent years, rapid advances have been made in many disciplines involving research on *P. syringae* pathovars, calling for an up-to-date coverage of this field of research. This book is the 9th volume in the series 'Developments in Plant Pathology' and is a review of the proceedings of the 5th International Conference on *Pseudomonas syringae* Pathovars and Related Pathogens, held in Berlin in September 1995. It attempts to provide a balanced overview of the recent developments in a wide range of fields, all involving research on *P. syringae* pathovars.

The book starts with a nice foreword describing the life of 1905 Nobel prize winner Robert Koch who coined 'the postulates of Koch' in Berlin more than 100 years ago. The book is divided into seven chapters covering different aspects of research on *P. syringae* pathovars and the diseases they cause. In the preface, the editors state that at the beginning of each chapter, internationally renowned experts critically review the recent developments in their field of research. However, most of the opening papers do not significantly differ from the rest of the papers; instead of a comprehensive overview they present their own latest findings and views. The book contains a total of 119 papers of 1 to 11 pages in length (on average 5-6 pages). The papers are unequally distributed over seven different chapters which may be illustrative for the research efforts in each area: ecology and epidemiology (20 papers), the resistant reaction of the plant (8 papers), pathogenesis (31 papers), determinants of pathogenicity (10 papers), genetic analysis of the host/plant-interaction (7 papers), identification and taxonomy (28 papers),

and disease control (13 papers). All papers have been reviewed by the editors.

Each chapter contains an extensive amount of information reflecting the current state of knowledge, although in some rapidly progressing areas the presented information is not completely up-to-date. The book gives new insights into pathogenicity factors, the mode of action and structure of *P. syringae* produced toxins, as well as the genetic basis of *P. syringae*-plant interactions. Other highlights are the presentation of new detection and identification methods for classification purposes and epidemiological studies. Moreover, successful strategies for control of *P. syringae* and related pathogens are presented.

The book contains an extensive index that is really helpful for finding subjects of interest. Many papers contain (full colour) pictures which makes them pleasant to read. In many ways the editors succeeded in their attempt to make the book more than a record of the proceedings of the above mentioned meeting. Unfortunately the lay-out of the papers is not very uniform as line spacing and point size of the letters differs between papers, something that I would not have expected in such an expensive book. Nevertheless, the book is a helpful reference work for students and researchers who want to get updated on the whole area of *P. syringae* research.

Corné M.J. Pieterse
Section of Plant Pathology
Department of Plant Ecology
and Evolutionary Biology
Utrecht University
P.O. Box 800.84
3508 TB Utrecht
The Netherlands