

(P.O. Box 332, Bogor 16122, Indonesia). Another paperback edition of this important volume will to be published in 2001 (approx. 140 Dutch Guilder or US \$65.00).

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### **Biotechnology**

Second completely revised edition. Edited by H.-J. Rehm and G. Reed in cooperation with A. Pühler and P. Stadler, Vol. 5a, 1998, pp. 562, Volume Editors A. Mountain, U.M. Ney, D. Schomburg: Recombinant Proteins, Monoclonal Antibodies, and Therapeutic Genes. ISBN 3-527-28310-2. Wiley-VCH, Weinheim, Germany, 545.-DM.

The series Biotechnology of VCH aims to give an overview of the state-of-the-art for a broad range of people working in biotechnology and related fields. Volume 5a covers in the first part some basic aspects of protein structure and function, technical aspects related to inclusion bodies together with recent examples of medical and industrial applications of recombinant proteins. The second and more detailed part is devoted to monoclonal antibodies, mostly in medical applications but including a chapter on immunoaffinity chromatography, and ranges from basic principles of antibody engineering and expression to clinical case studies. The third part provides an overview of the emerging field of gene therapy with an introduction to the concept and overviews of established viral and non-viral delivery systems. This part includes also overviews of the regulatory mechanisms, mostly in the US and the EU, to be considered for antibody and gene therapeutic applications. This wide range of topics is mostly covered by a more or less comprehensive review of presently established projects and applications, briefly discussed but referring the reader to the

primary literature, covered approximately up to 1995–98, for details.

As biotechnology is a quite fast developing field, the book, as well as the corresponding chapter, is, in the words of one of the authors (p. 173), ‘...like a snapshot in a family photo album, serving to document events of the past...’. But in enumerating the present concepts and applications it can provide the reader with valuable reference points to be followed up for details and future developments in the primary literature and/or by using the information available on the web. On the other hand this may be one of the weak points of the book as beginners in the field probably would prefer, at least in some instances, a broader conceptual discussion including the present limitations and expected trends, while people already working in the field may be more interested in the details of specific topics. On the whole it is a comprehensive reference book for people active in, and already familiar with, some aspect of biotechnology but wanting to keep up with recent developments in related topics.

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