

The book contains a comprehensive amount of detailed information of value to those concerned with the production, processing and utilization of this highly valued but neglected crop, or for those contemplating embarking on new saffron enterprises. For those who wish to learn more about the crop, including harvesting the flowers in the early hours of the morning and delicately separating the stigmas by hand, the book is a good investment at £33.50.

Roger W. Smith

*Sugar Beet*. Edited by A. P. Draycott. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing (2006), pp. 474, £125.00. ISBN 10: 1-4051-1911-X. doi:10.1017/S0014479706334539

This significant work largely updates and furthers the seminal work on the subject by Cooke and Scott (*The Sugar Beet Crop*, Chapman and Hall, 1993). For those familiar with the earlier publication, this contribution follows a similar format, with initial chapters dealing with the development of the crop, its physiology, genetics and breeding. A chapter on seed production precedes sections on growing the crop, from soil tillage and establishment, through nutrition, irrigation and crop protection. The cycle is completed with chapters on storage, processing and quality. The structure is coherent as a whole although each of the 17 chapters stands as a review on its own. This is more than just an update, with an overlapping, but different selection of authors (32 in total) from the previous book. The review format generates an extensive list of references (over 2500), a significant proportion appearing after the mid 1990s. The editor has done well to ensure a consistent and high quality throughout. The style will engage lead practitioners and advisors, as well as students and researchers. There are a few minor quibbles, which may vary with readers, but I would have thought that to look forward, having only one page dedicated to genetic transformation was somewhat miserly. Also, not having a chapter or more dedicated to environmental issues such as effects on biodiversity, energy balances and pollution possibly reflects an over-reliance on the structure of the previous tome. Nonetheless, this book is a major contribution and is highly recommended for anyone working or researching with the crop.

Michael Gooding

*Fruits for the Future. 8. Monkey Orange. Strychnos cocculoides*. By C. K. Mwamba. Southampton, UK: Southampton Centre for Underutilised Crops (2006), pp. 98, available free on request to national scientists of developing countries. ISBN 0854328416. doi:10.1017/S0014479706344535

As someone who first tasted *Strychnos cocculoides* in 1971 and has been involved with the domestication of wild species, including that of *Strychnos*, I was keen to read this book. Has the book succeeded in its aim of promoting its selection, domestication and marketing? On the whole, yes, although there are a number of sections with information that is hard to understand.

The section on taxonomy is useful, with the most common species described and included in an identification key. Misleading single point locations for the species are given for each country, when the descriptions are much better, and contradict the former. The section on uses is good, and goes beyond simply stating palatability. The section on ecology contains interesting information alongside a table with the various soil types that gives a maximum stocking density to *Strychnos cocculoides* of six trees per hectare – surely this is what occurs in the wild rather than the maximum potential? This is followed by two tables on specific sites in Botswana that could have been omitted as they give nothing useful for the reader.

In conclusion, this is the best book on *Strychnos* available and it does contain useful information, but I can't help but feel that a second edition could make improvements, and with luck incorporate additional research findings.

Ian Martin

*Fruits for the Future 9. Mangosteen (Garcinia mangostana)*. By M. bin Osman and Rahman Milan. Southampton, UK: Southampton Centre for Underutilised Crops (2006), pp. 170, available free on request to national scientists of developing countries. ISBN 0854328173. doi:10.1017/S0014479706334531

This book is the latest in a series on underutilized tropical fruit crops. Thirteen chapters cover taxonomy and distribution, production volumes, ecology and agronomy, harvesting, processing, economics and marketing.