Ecological Basis of Agroforestry. Edited by D. R. Batish, R. K. Kohli, S. Jose and H. P. Singh. Baco Raton, Fl, USA: CRC Press/Taylor and Francis Group (2008), pp. 382, £68.99. ISBN 1-4200-4327-7. doi:10.1017/S0014479708006856

This book discusses both temperate and tropical agroforestry with extensive use of tables and figures. Fifty contributors from 17 different countries have written 19 chapters, each of which has its own reference list. Chapter length varies from 10 to 12 pages in general to some 40 pages each for two case studies and a comprehensive study on litter dynamics in plantation and agroforestry systems of the tropics. The introductory chapter is an excellent overview with conclusions and suggestions for the way forward.

The first two sections contain 13 contributions on above- and root mediated below-ground ecological interactions, including alley cropping, pest management and allelopathy but excluding home gardens. The third section deals with modelling by presenting a theoretical hypothesis and demonstrating progress in the use of computer-based designs for shelterbelts, albeit in regions with rich access to data. The final section provides examples of the impact and socio-economic aspects of agroforestry technologies with lessons learnt. Although their widespread adoption still faces constraints, agroforestry technologies can play a crucial role in future land use. Since the users require more knowledge, highlights on future training needs would have been helpful. Also, successful implementation of agroforestry requires more attention to policy issues, e.g. scaling up activities and mechanisms for creating policy conducive to agroforestry in conventional ministries of agriculture and/or forestry. This informative volume on ecological interactions is recommended to scientists and researchers of agroforestry, university teachers and students of both agriculture and forestry.

Bo M. I. Bengtsson

Microbial Biotechnology in Horticulture. Volume 2. Edited by R. C. Ray and O. P. Ward. Enfield, NH, USA: Science Publishers (2008), pp. 352, £47.60. ISBN 978-1-57808-517-0. doi:10.1017/S0014479708006868

Like a curate's egg, this eclectic compilation is good in parts, although the choice of topics was puzzling, even accepting that 'biotechnology' is more than GM, and that 'microbes' encompass more than bacteria. Sadly, the overall consistency and standard of editing are both poor to non-existent. Some chapter titles make little sense in English, and little or no effort has been made to avoid substantial overlap and redundancy between chapters, and/or apparently with chapters in Volume 1.

Chapter 1 is a structurally muddled attempt to provide an overview of GM crops, with little reference to horticulture. Only 11 pages out of 85 attempt (confusingly) to describe the biotechnicalities of GM. Chapter 2 is slightly more focussed on horticulture, but there is considerable overlap with the GM technology covered in Chapter 1. Chapter 3 is another simplistic repetition of GM methodology with little or no mention of horticulture. Chapter 4 is more readable and authoritative, complementing two chapters in Volume 1 on nitrogen-fixing and biocontrol bacteria. Chapter 5 reiterates a chapter on mycorrhizal fungi in horticulture in Volume 1. While Chapter 6 is far more readable, sound and informative, it repeats the arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi saga of Chapter 5. Chapter 7 introduces biopesticides, specifically baculoviruses, with their long tradition of sound, high-quality molecular biology research. Chapter 8 focuses on natural anti-microbial compounds from plants (predominantly), animals or microbes (very few) that could be used to prolong the shelf-life of horticultural products. Finally, Chapter 9, which is well-structured and clearly presented, focuses on mycotoxigenic organisms (*Penicillium, Aspergillus and Alternia* spp.) that affect fruit, a subject of major importance to human health.

In conclusion, tighter editing and greater focus would have added to the value and timeliness of this collection of topics.

T. Michael A. Wilson

Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops: 2007. Brief 37. By C. James. Ithaca, NY, USA: International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (2007), pp. 125 + 15 pp. Executive Summary, US$50.00, free to eligible nationals of developing countries. ISBN 978-1-892456-42-7. doi:10.1017/S001447970800687X

This excellent, informative publication on the global status of commercialized biotech/GM crops in 2007 presents data and information from a wide front that serve to facilitate a knowledge-based discussion of current trends. An increase of 12% of biotech crops between 2006 and 2007 to 114.3 million hectares is impressive,