

## Book reviews

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*Pests of Fruit Crops: A Colour Handbook*, by D. V. ALFORD, 450 pp. London: Manson Publishing Ltd (2007). £95.00 (hardback). ISBN 1840760516.

It is rare to see such a comprehensive, well-illustrated book of insect and mite pests of a wide range of fruit and hops. This Colour Handbook builds on the very successful 'A Colour Atlas of Fruit Pests', first published in 1984, which was largely limited to pests in the British Isles. This fully revised edition now includes pests in Europe, and as such will be valuable for many consultants, growers, researchers, students and lecturers who are increasingly working throughout Europe. A comprehensive list of pests of top and small fruits is illustrated with over 1100 high quality photographs which should aid accurate identification of the pest. Most of the images in the book have been taken by the author and reflect the pest itself or the damage it causes. Very occasionally, images of small insects and mites would have benefited from being enlarged, or alternatives sourced elsewhere, e.g. image 259, raspberry beetle adult, is in my opinion too indistinct to be useful. Similarly, a better understanding of mites would have benefited from images of examples of individuals or small groups. This may be nit-picking, as more than adequate images of the damage caused are shown. The description of the various stages of the pest's development is simple and concise and the life history and damage, although brief, is more than adequate for the purpose of the book.

Accurate identification is essential as pest management of high quality and high value fruit relies more on Integrated Pest and Disease Management or Integrated Fruit Production systems. Having access to such a comprehensive Handbook will make this task much easier and accurate so that the appropriate control strategy can be chosen.

I would strongly recommend this book to anyone working or teaching in the field of fruit crops. The new layout is clear and to a large extent 'future-proofed' as this edition does not refer to control measures which are constantly changing and rapidly become out dated. I might criticize the book for the cost, but the quality of the finish and images to a large extent

justifies the price asked. If the previous editions are anything to go by, this will become a well-thumbed book that needs to stand up to constant use.

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*Inositol Phosphates: Linking Agriculture and the Environment*, eds B. L. TURNER, A. E. RICHARDSON & E. J. MULLANEY, 288 pp. Wallingford, UK: CABI (2007). £60.00 (hardback). ISBN 978 1 84593 152 1.

Inositol phosphates are abundant in nature, and most of the phosphorus (P) in seeds, and much of the P in soils and sediments, occurs as *myo*-inositol hexakisphosphate (phytate). Indeed, it is estimated that commercially produced seeds and fruit contain about 51 Mt phytate, which is apparently equivalent to about two thirds of the annual application of inorganic P fertilizers. Unfortunately, phytate cannot be digested by monogastric animals, such as pigs, chickens and humans, and phytate in soils is generally unavailable for plant growth. For these reasons, efforts have been made recently to reduce phytate in diets of monogastric animals and to understand the transformations of inositol phosphates in the environment both to improve P use in agriculture and to reduce losses of P to susceptible ecosystems.

Benjamin Turner, Alan Richardson and Edward Mullaney have done an excellent job in editing this book to produce a narrative of interesting and informative chapters of consistently high standard. All chapters are current and authoritative, and conclude with a summary and recommendations for further research that provides a perfect *aide memoire* for busy students, teachers and researchers.

The book begins with a useful glossary of terms provided by Stephen Shears and Benjamin Turner. It illustrates the nine stereoisomers of the parent inositol moiety and describes the nomenclature used to describe the many phosphorylated derivatives (63 different compounds are possible in the case of *myo*-inositol alone) and their conformational isomers. The following chapters then review the classical methods