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Biology of Hevea *rubber*. By P. M. Priyadarshan. Wallingford, UK: CABI (2011), pp. 232, £90.00. ISBN 978-1-84593-666-2.

This book has eight main chapters, covering the history and development of the rubber industry, plant structure and ecophysiology, latex production, genetics and breeding, tissue culture, biotechnology and molecular biology, agronomy and nutrition, and environmental and biological constraints. There are also short chapters on honey and timber from rubber, and on rubber and the Clean Development Mechanism. The author set out to produce a replacement for the comprehensive work described by Webster and Baulkwill in their book *Rubber* (Longman, UK 1989), and this new book is certainly more up-to-date, with over 300 references later than 1989. Breeding, tissue culture and molecular biology are well handled, and there is a useful section on adaptation of clones to marginal conditions. However, some of the other chapters are poor, badly organised and repetitive, while some sections have been copied verbatim, without acknowledgement, from Webster and Baulkwill (but with occasional errors; for example, relative growth rate in units of g. wk^{-1}, where the original has, correctly, g. g^{-1}. wk^{-1}). Tapping system notation is described, but the reasons for choosing different systems are hardly discussed, and coverage of yield stimulation and micro-tapping is cursory. The section on biological constraints covers leaf diseases, with a good discussion on South American leaf blight, but there is no mention of the various root, stem and tapping panel diseases that affect rubber. Overall, the book is a useful contribution, but for a complete view of the crop, the reader will still need Webster and Baulkwill's book.

Hereward Corley

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Wild Crop Relatives: Genomic and Breeding Resources Vegetables. Edited by C. Kole. Heidelberg, Germany: Springer (2011), pp. 282, £135.00. ISBN 978-3-642-20449-4.

This is one volume of a series of 10 volumes, totalling 125 chapters. Each volume deals with a category of crops, and each chapter with a taxon. Purchasers should be aware that 'Vegetables' is not a stand-alone volume: brassicas are in the 'Oilseeds' volume and peas and beans are in 'Legumes'. Watermelon and the grain forms of *Amaranthus* are included in this volume.

Each chapter has at least two authors, drawn from research institutes and universities, and covers botany, evolution, genetic conservation, the documented and potential uses of wild genes, wild relatives as new domesticates, and techniques (mainly molecular-based), which are increasingly overcoming problems often associated with wide crosses (e.g. hybrid sterility, and the recovery of acceptable cultivars). Some authors discuss the problems of wide-cross progenies and wild transgenes escaping from cultivation.

The book can be divided into the chapter on tomatoes (14 authors, 88 pages), and the rest (other *Solanum* spp, *Allium*, *Daucus*, *Lactuca*, *Capsicum*, *Raphanus*, *Spinacia*, *Cucumis*, *Momordica* and *Asparagus*). Much of the logic and practice of genetic conservation and exploitation is based on tomatoes, and many cultivars have been produced containing wild genes. The species continues to inspire – for example, genetic mechanisms have been found which may explain why wide crosses can give unexpected, advantageous progenies. The book would have benefited from the synthesis of ideas, technologies and objectives across its subjects: in particular – does tomato as a model reveal what could be done with other vegetable species?

Peter Crisp

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Genetics, Genomics and Breeding of Berries. Edited by K. M. Folta and C. Kole. Boca Raton, FL, USA: CRC Press (2011), pp. 200, £63.99. ISBN 978-1-578-087007-5.