

to poor farmers, the extent of potential damage to agricultural production, the area of the land affected, and the likelihood that one stress might worsen other biotic and abiotic stresses. Using those criteria, drought was ranked as the highest priority, followed by low soil fertility, soil acidity and cold stress. This ranking largely reflects that of scientists working in close contact with farmers' communities.

A table listing a minimum set of questions on abiotic stress and linking researchers' views of the challenges abiotic stresses present with farmers perception and knowledge, concludes the book.

The book definitively contributes to improve the understanding of some of the issues related to the amount and distribution of crop genetic diversity particularly in the presence of abiotic stresses, and how the farmers manage it; because of the increasing pressure of climatic changes, and because of the wide range of research questions it raises, the book is recommended for both research scientists and research administrators.

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Vegetable Diseases – A Colour Handbook, by S. T. KOIKE, P. GLADDERS & A. O. PAULUS. 448 pp. London: Manson Publishing Ltd (2007). £95.00. ISBN 1840760753 (hardback).

There is always a need for easy to use, accessible, up-to-date and accurate pictorial guides to diseases of plants and I believe this book goes a long way to achieving these requirements for vegetable crops. The book has three main sections. The first is an introduction to vegetable crops and diseases where the

general background to pathogens and their significance to vegetable production are considered. This is really worth reading to appreciate the questions to consider before examining and attempting to diagnose problems with an infected plant. The second major section is the actual description of the diseases of vegetable crops arranged alphabetically in plant family groups with a final section on speciality and herb crops. This is well organized, clear and provides excellent coverage. I particularly like the way that for some broad host range pathogens such as *Sclerotinia* species, cross-references are made to the same pathogen on different hosts, enhancing the information available. The final section comprises a useful glossary and index. The index generally seems to function well although the alternative common names of cilantro and coriander are used without clear linkage (see p. 53, 396 and 440) in contrast to eggplant and aubergine. I would also have liked to have seen some old but well-established Latin names for some plants such as *Lycopersicon esculentum* for tomato, at least mentioned for consistency even though formally they have been superseded. However, these are minor points of detail.

The authors have targeted this book at a very wide audience from experts such as research and extension plant pathologists, through teachers and students, farmers and regulators to interested home gardeners and I believe they have generally been very successful in this aim. While never substituting for use of detailed academic texts or the services of a plant pathology laboratory for accurate diagnosis, it really is a useable and helpful book that I'm sure will find regular use with many of the target audience. At £95.00 it is rather expensive to buy personally, perhaps reflecting the cost of producing a book containing over 600 colour photographs on glossy paper, but it should be a valuable addition to both university and public libraries.

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