

together the information to provide a final conclusion. It is nevertheless a very useful publication for its target audience: researchers in agronomy, plant and environmental sciences.

Elaine Booth

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*Genetics, Genomics and Breeding of Oilseed Brassicas*. Edited by D. Edwards, J. Batley, I. Parkin and C. Kole. Boca Raton, FL, USA: CRC Press (2011), pp. 440, £89.00. ISBN 978-1-57808-720-4.

We live in interesting times! There is a global realisation of the need for greater and sustainable food production – from a shrinking arable area. This comes after a long period of agricultural decline, particularly in Europe and more seriously a very significant decline in agricultural research. The days of the Green Revolution are over and we have nothing to replace it. The only hope is for improved crop production through improved genetics. Traditional methods of breeding have performed well in the past but are clearly struggling with new challenges. The new molecular technologies of genetics and genomics hold the key to future productivity. These technologies are alien to many involved in traditional breeding, and for them this book will be a revelation.

Written by acknowledged experts in their fields, this book provides a window into the future with well-written and very readable accounts of the origins of the brassica oil crops, followed by a series of chapters outlining the latest technologies of genomics and their uses. Each chapter is more or less self-contained and can be read in isolation – there is therefore some understandable duplication in their introductions. The subjects are well referenced and this book will provide an excellent introduction to modern breeding. More importantly, the book clearly outlines the use and capabilities of these technologies.

For any young breeder and any older ones looking for a new lease in life, this book will become an essential reading.

Jo Bowman

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*Defending the Social Licence of Farming: Issues, Challenges and New Directions for Agriculture*. Edited by J. Williams and P. V. Martin. Collingwood, Australia: CSIRO Publishing (2011), pp. 206, AU\$49.95. ISBN 978-0-643-10159-3.

As farms become larger, more intensive and commercial, and as townspeople make increasing demands on the availability and quality of natural resources, the relationship between rural and urban communities has become increasingly strained. This is the background addressed by 19 authors (mostly Australian) of this well-referenced book concerned with the erosion of the ‘social licence’ enjoyed by farmers. Although the text is mainly concerned with competing demands for water by the Australian irrigated cropping sector, consideration is given to other areas of potential conflict such as land-use, biodiversity and conservation, pollution, animal welfare and the general sustainability of rural environment. Attempted solutions to such conflicts may be legalistic or voluntary, but all require trust, credibility and cooperation between farmers, competing groups and governments.

The first section deals with theoretical and historical aspects of the ‘social licence to farm’, followed by consideration of alternative approaches of alleviating tensions between communities. The third section deals solely with institutional and legal solutions, illustrated by case studies, which include some from the United States and Europe.

The book covers the field well, although with considerable overlap between chapters, but the final chapter (and an excellent Preface) pulls the material together into a very readable overview. Although the case studies are useful, some are overly descriptive and lack numerical detail.

The book is recommended for professionals working on rural/urban interface, including representatives of relevant interest groups (including farmers). It would also provide material for students of rural planning by using individual chapters for group discussion, or for application to live case studies.

Mike Daw