

Reviews and publications received

J. HORVÁTH: Növényvírusok, vektorok, vírusátvitel (Plant viruses, vectors and transmission of viruses), 1972. pp. 514; 61 tables, 89 photographs, drawings and diagrams; references.

The author has written a comprehensive book on general plant virology in the Hungarian language. Although written in a language understood by few potential users, many others may find the book useful, since it provides an enormous quantity of data in understandable tables. Moreover, on all subjects covered in this book an extensive list of recent literature is presented.

The contents (given also in English) show that the author gives an excellent survey of recent plant virology. Attention is paid to the viruses and their properties, transmission, relationship between viruses and their hosts, relationships between viruses and their insect vectors and also to mycoplasmas.

At the end of the book are given a list of virus names and their cryptograms, an author index and a subject index.

J. A. DE BOKX

J. A. DE BOKX (Ed.): Viruses of potatoes and seed-potato production. Wageningen, Centre for Agricultural Publishing and Documentation, 1972. pp. 233; Price Dfl. 36.

More is known about virus diseases of the potato than about those of most other crop plants, and workers in the Netherlands have contributed more than their share of this knowledge. Ensuring freedom from virus diseases is an important part of seed potato growing, and again the Dutch have often led in applying research findings to this end. This book describes Dutch experience and methods, and their scientific basis.

The chapters, mostly by different authors, are of two main types – one type giving background information, for example on electron microscopy, and the other being more intimately concerned with the potato. De Bokx gives sound advice on the precautions needed when handling viruses, Hille Ris Lambers writes interestingly about potato aphids, van Slogteren contributes a balanced account of serological methods, and Beemster and Rozendaal give a useful summary of the properties and symptomatology of the viruses affecting potatoes. Wiersema's chapter on breeding for resistance, and Reestman's salutary demonstration that 5–10% of virus-infected plants can often be tolerated in ware crops (though not in seed crops) because of the yield compensation made by neighbouring virus-free plants, are also well worth reading. By contrast, I found the chapters on aphid control in the Netherlands, therapy, and on soil-borne viruses unnecessarily confined to Dutch work and somewhat out of date in a wider context. For instance, the story of freeing the *King Edward* potato from virus

by meristem culture, and the use of insecticides to prolong the life of potato stocks in certain ware-growing areas, surely should merit a mention.

As indicated in the Preface, the authors primarily describe how things are done in the Netherlands, though the book's title might mislead the reader into thinking the coverage is broader. But instead of adding the words 'in the Netherlands' to the title, I would have preferred the authors to have made more use of the opportunity to compare the ecological situations and the methods used in different countries (especially in Europe), to describe the special problems encountered in particular areas, and to attempt to evolve general principles. But despite these comments, the book should certainly not be considered simply as scientific window dressing for the Dutch seed potato industry; it will be useful to plant pathologists, agronomists and students concerned with potatoes in many countries.

The book is well illustrated and attractively produced. Finally, a word of commendation to the authors for writing in a foreign language. Their English, though in some places angular, rarely fails to convey the essentials.

B. D. HARRISON