

## Book review

**Compendium of onion and garlic diseases.** Edited by Howard F. Schwartz and S. Krishna Mohan. Published in 1994 by APS Press, St Paul, Minnesota, United States. 90 p., softcover. ISBN 0-89054-170-1. Price: US\$30.00 (United States); US\$37.00 (elsewhere).

This publication is part of the ongoing series of compendia produced by the American Phytopathological Society on diseases of plants. Twenty-nine volumes of the disease compendia series dealing with many of the world's other major plant crops have been published to date. These volumes are widely regarded as excellent reference books providing the user with factual information to assist in the identification and understanding of most diseases of the theme crop worldwide. The aims of the book are to provide a comprehensive, authoritative, and up-to-date account of onion and garlic diseases. It is designed to assist in the diagnosis of onion and garlic diseases in the field and the laboratory and to provide guidelines for their control.

The volume being reviewed is structured in a format which is similar to previous compendia, consisting of many concise and informative accounts, often illustrated with diagrams and photographs. The Introduction gives a brief outline of the taxonomy of the genus *Allium*, the origins and importance of the principal *Allium* species, onion and garlic anatomy, a short summary of onion and garlic diseases and pathogens, and disease management. Part I deals with onion and garlic diseases. It groups the diseases into the following categories: diseases of subterranean parts caused by fungi, diseases of aerial parts caused by fungi, diseases of bulbs caused by fungi, diseases caused by bacteria and a yeast, diseases caused by nematodes, and diseases caused by viruses and mycoplasma-like organisms. Flowering plants that are parasitic to onions are also described. The diseases within each section are treated individually and are arranged in alphabetical order. Part II describes non-infectious abiotic conditions such as temperature stress, moisture stress, pesticides, and mineral imbalance. The Glossary is a comprehensive and useful feature, and the Index makes finding things easy by listing scientific names of the causal

agents as well as the common names of the diseases.

The descriptions of the diseases follow the familiar "compendium" format. Each disease is described by one or more authors who are recognised as world authorities on the subject. The length of each description usually reflects the economic importance (in the United States) of the disease being described. Each account starts with background information about the disease, including its geographic distribution. This is followed by a brief description of the disease symptoms; a description of the causal organism or agent; details of the annual disease cycle and epidemiology; methods to control the disease; and selected references. A set of 100 colour photographs of disease symptoms and their causal agents are presented separately in 16 pages in the centre of the book. The section on non-infectious diseases provides less information on each topic, in most instances only briefly describing the symptoms and causes of the various disorders.

This book maintains the high standard previously set by the other compendiums published by the American Phytopathological Society. The fact that the 27 contributing authors to this publication are from the United States and Canada (in contrast to other compendiums which had input from international authors) does not detract from the quality and calibre of this book. The individual accounts of each disease or disorder are clearly and concisely written, the black and white photographs and life cycle illustrations are very useful, and the comprehensive set of colour plates in the middle of the book are of high quality and clearly illustrate the particular disease or disorder. This volume provides a valuable tool to assist in the diagnosis and understanding of onion and garlic diseases and disorders, and in the formulation of possible control strategies. I am sure that it will prove to be an indispensable reference book to plant pathologists, growers, crop consultants, and others working in the onion and garlic industry.

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