BOOK REVIEW

Westcott's Plant Disease Handbook – 6th Edition

R.K. HORST

Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 2001, 1008 pp.
ISBN 0-7923-8663-9 (EUR 330)

Science, including plant pathology, is characterized by very fast development of knowledge. This is a reason why the life time of scientific book is mostly rather short. There are many books which were printed only one times and the title disappeared. In the field of plant pathology I know two long lasting bestsellers. The first one is Plant Pathology written G.N. Agrios, where during last more than thirty years four editions has been published. As a second bestseller could be considered recently reviewed book Westcott's Plant Disease Handbook which had in 2001 50th anniversary. As told Dr. Cynthia Westcott in her preface to the first edition: " It is easy enough to start a book on plant disease. It is impossible to finish it …". There were published many revisions containing a new information during last fifty years. The last one is 6th edition which was released in the end of 2001.

This revision retains the same general format as the previous editions. However, some parts of the *Handbook* has been substantially updated; i.e. information about pesticides; taxonomic changes have been made by all pathogenic organisms; new host plants have been added; a new diseases, their photographs and drawings have been included.

Handbook could be considered as a reference manual which is divided except introduction into four main chapters. In introduction is characterised what is plant disease, plant pathology in USA and principles of control. Chapter 1 gives recent survey on agricultural and garden chemicals which are listed and characterised in alphabetical order. There are many valuable data, including trade and common names, effectiveness etc. Chapter 2 summarise the recent classification of plant pathogens (fungi; bacteria; viruses, viroids and phytoplasmas; nematodes) and provides valuable recent information about most important pathogenic groups and plant pathogens. Chapter 3 describes specific diseases which are grouped according to their common names into forty types in alphabetical order. This treatment is very valuable for practical plant pathologists. Chapter 4 represents the survey of host plants and their diseases. Altogether there are involved 1254 host plants in alphabetical order, including all most important agricultural and horticultural plants, however some plants growing in the wild. There are addresses of state universities and agricultural experiment stations in the USA in the end of book. As a very valuable could also be considered glossary. Selected bibliography involves old but also new titles of literature sources and books. Only to this part I may have one critical remark. I am missing there more recent literature and specialized textbooks. Easy orientation in *Handbook* is possible by well designed index.

The book should be useful to plant pathologist, disease consultants, laboratories involved in diagnosis, however could be also an excellent guide for gardeners, florists, nurserymen and naturalists. The book should also be valuable source of information for teachers and students of plant pathology, agriculture, botany and life sciences. Finally I can say that authors and publisher are to be commended for an excellent piece of work.

ALEŠ LEBEDA (Olomouc)

AN ABITUARY NOTICE

Dr. Cyprian Paulech
(27. 11. 1929–28. 12. 2001)

On December 28, 2001 in Bratislava died one of the outstanding Slovak phytopathologists Dr. Cyprián Paulech.

He was born on November 27, 1929 in Modrova, nearby the famous Slovak spa Piešťany. Professional education was obtained by him at the University of Agriculture in Prague, where he decided to specialise on plant protection. During his university years he took the advantage of studying in seminars of such celebrities in the field of phytopathology as Prof. Smolák, Dr. Zakopal, Dr. Novak and others. In 1954 he graduated from the university as a fresh phytopathologist.

He began his career at the Plant Breeding Station in Pstruša, where he started publishing his first scientific works, devoted at that time to wheat dwarf smut (*Tilletia controversa*) – a plant disease, not known before in Czechoslovakia. In 1963 he entered services of Slovak Academy of Sciences at the former Biological Institute. There he continued education at postgraduate level. His PhD. work was objected on the study of the host-pathogen relationship of powdery mildew on barley as a host plant, where he identified those stages of the primary infection cycle in which the morphogenesis of the fungus is slowing down by the resistant host plant. Later on, this knowledge on the course of pathogenesis and the fungus response to the host resistant genes was used in great number of further physiological studies, not only by his colleagues at his native department of pathological physiology of plants, but by other domestic and foreign scientists as well. The results of this research were highly appraised – he and his fellow colleagues were rewarded with the Slovak Academy of Sciences Award for the brilliant scientific study.

Later he has started with morphogenetic studies of the parasitic fungus *Erysiphe graminis* on barley. This work, alongside many others to come, markedly contributed to the general knowledge of the host-pathogen interactions and disturbances in the plant physiological functions in course of pathogenesis. Obtained knowledge enlarged and deepened our view on the host-pathogen relationship and the environment role in this system.

During his remarkable scientific life he addressed many fields of phytopathologic mycology. His pioneer works were related with a hyperparasitic fungus *Tuberculina ustilaginum*, not known in Slovakia at that time. He also enriched our knowledge, having discovered that the fungus *Pseudomonas siringae* not only participates, but is the cause of die-back of fruit stone trees. He identified and described *Botrytis antophylla* – a parasite fungus of field clover. All objects of his interest could be barely mentioned here.

Though, we cannot miss his fundamental studies of micromycetes in Slovakia. He explored almost all regions of Slovakia in terms of variety of *Erysiphe* species. This long-term work led to publication of his fundamental publication "*Erysiphales* of Slovakia" edited by SAS in 1995. 108 phytopathogenic micromycetes hosted by 714 species of host plants of 64 genders are described there. The majority of them, including their host plants, were identified for the first time.

During his scientific life he had published more than 250 original scientific works, participating as a co-author in edition of 6 books. He was a member of many scientific and editorial bodies: the editorial board of the all-Czechoslovak scientific journal "Ochrana rostlin – Plant Protection", scientific societies of Slovak and Czechoslovak Academies of Sciences, of the relevant examination commissions for candidates applied to the doctor's degree, etc. Moreover, several generations of undergraduate and postgraduate students shall remember him as an extremely helpful and experienced teacher.

Till his retirement he worked at the Department of Pathological Physiology of Plants of the SAS Botanical Institute, the only department of such kind in the Central European post-socialist countries, where his scientific team was preparing the ground for development of plant mycology in Slovakia.

We are immensely proud of his many achievements. He will be missed beyond words.

Ing. ANTON JANITOR, PhD.
Director of the Institute of Experimental Phytopathology and Entomology, Slovak Academy of Sciences