

Book review

Compendium of cucurbit diseases and pests, Second edition

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The first edition of this Compendium was published in 1996. A large team of experts from all over the world has updated and significantly expanded it to produce this second edition of cucurbit diseases and pests. Three experienced editors have provided the latest information on the subject.

The compendium is divided into an introductory chapter and four parts. A general characteristic of cucurbit groups cultivated worldwide is given in the introductory chapter. Additional information is related to seed production, cultural practices, postharvest handling and cucurbit diseases, pests and disorders. The most extensive part deals with infectious diseases (136 pages), whereas the other three chapters deal with mite and insect pests, non-infectious (abiotic) disorders, and diseases or disorders of unknown etiology. The publication is complemented with a useful appendix containing current common names of diseases, a glossary and an index.

The first part titled 'Infectious Diseases' is divided into several chapters dealing with diseases of subterranean and aerial plant parts caused by fungi and oomycetes, diseases caused by bacteria, phytoplasmas, preharvest and postharvest fruit rots, diseases caused by viruses, diseases caused by nematodes, and diseases by parasitic seed plants.

Each disease or disorder is characterised by its history, distribution, symptoms, causal organism or agent, disease cycle and epidemiology. Recommendations for management and selected references are added. The numerous colour pictures depicting symptoms of the diseases are very useful. The presented microscopic characteristics of some pathogens enable an accurate diagnosis. In addition, tables summarising diagnostic information on foliar diseases, vine declines and fruit rots allow to diagnose plant diseases with similar symptoms.

In recent years, the popularity and thus the production of various cucurbits has increased significantly. At the same time, new diseases, pests and disorders have occurred and spread to production areas. The significantly expanded and updated second edition of the Compendium will therefore serve as a helpful source of information for all commercial and non-commercial crop growers and gardeners. Moreover, the professionally elaborated text and illustrative photo documentation makes the book helpful in plant pathology education.

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