As someone who was unfortunately unable to attend the symposium in Japan last year, this volume serves as a testament to both the hard work of the organizers and the wide range of research topics currently considered by plant lipidologists. Whilst the chance to witness the potentially volatile combination of lipids, sushi, beer and karaoke was sadly missed, it is safe to say that these scientific contributions have clearly hit the right note.

J. A. Napier

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LITERATURE CITED


Plant growth and development. Hormones and the environment.

The number of undergraduates studying for a degree in the Plant Sciences has declined over the last 10 years and publication of a textbook focused largely on this dwindling audience is therefore necessarily a rare event. Indeed, in the preface it is stated that, although the application of molecular technologies has dramatically changed the way we view plant biological systems, it is over 20 years since a comparable volume (Wareing and Phillips) appeared on the shelves. What is even more unusual is that the text has been compiled not by a committee but as a result of the labours of a single individual. It is brave indeed for one person to feel sufficiently confident of tackling such a broad topic as the regulation of plant growth and development but there are advantages to the reader in terms of consistency of style and integration of ideas. Overall, the book is well written, the information is up-to-date, comprehensively referenced, and committed to paper in an authoritative manner. The author has necessarily chosen to be selective in terms of the material that has been included and all that I might quibble with is the omission of a chapter focused exclusively on flowering.

Most of the target audience for this book have spent their formative years being exposed to slick publications packed with glossy images in full colour. Expectations are high and even the average lecturer now expects a textbook to be associated with a website where images can be downloaded directly into their latest PowerPoint presentation. I suspect it may be a disappointment for readers to have to pour through what is very much a black and white book where green boxes identify highlights and the quality of the half-tones is low. The gems may shine through for the enthusiast but for the average undergraduate the twinkling may be obscured by the quality of production. This is an unfortunate criticism that should have been addressed by the publisher but one that could have a severe impact on the size of the market for this otherwise very creditable publication.

J. Roberts

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