

Book review

The World Wheat Book: A History of Wheat Breeding

edited by

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Although wheat breeding as a science can retrospect on a good one-hundred years only, in the infinity ends the row of people, who managed, maintained, protected and improved this cereal, probably the oldest food crop, grown on a larger acreage than any other nourishing plant species, over a wealth of centuries. In the form of an attractive manual, this book is a homage to all of them.

Moreover, this book is a good example of how the diversity expressing in national/international skill, inventiveness, tradition and collection can be amalgamated into a common principle: care and improvement of a plant providing our everyday bread.

Task of the editors was enormous: to give a detailed insight into the “wheat pools” of the Globe, beginning from agroecological traits of the individual lands through the breeding practices up to the results achieved in biotechnology and molecular genetic. Besides the “pool” chapters, many others dealing with origin of the cultivated wheat, genetic basis of varietal improvement, induced mutations, in vitro breeding, apomixis, hybrid wheat, molecular markers, genomics, transformation, future world supply and demand are offered to the readers. All these presented on 1181 pages and in 44 chapters divided into 13 parts, contributed by 123 authors. The References as a whole and the famous - unusually in separate blocks arranged - illustrations represent a special value. It is hoped, however, that the next edition will include chapters on Iberian, Scandinavian (except Denmark), North African and Chilean wheat pools as well and that the mistyped nouns (mainly Hungarian ones) will also be corrected.

This book is warmly recommended for wheat breeders, geneticists, physiologists, biotechnologists, wheat growers, technologists and for everybody active in wheat business.

Dr. F. Sági

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