

Heldt, H.-W.: **Plant Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**. – Oxford University Press, Oxford – New York – Tokyo 1997. ISBN 0 19 850180 3. 522 pp., GBP 65.00.

To write a good textbook for such a wide subject as plant biochemistry and molecular biology represents a difficult task for author, especially when the text is intended for an undergraduate audience. Author's main goal was to give the reader a general view of the whole subject of plant biochemistry, explain the basic principles of plant metabolism, and present this material in a reasonably balanced form without excessive details. This aim has been achieved and this comprehensive textbook covers all the main topics and points out current and future research tasks.

Following an introduction, the book is organized into 22 chapters. The first part of the book focuses on basic reactions of plant biochemistry such as photosynthesis. Following chapters cover nitrogen and sulfate metabolism, plant storage proteins, secondary metabolism, and function of plant hormones. The last three chapters are

devoted to the basics of plant molecular biology. Each chapter contains a brief content and a list of selected references. All topics are well illustrated by numerous figures, schemes, and good quality photographs. Two versions of contents (Brief contents and Contents) seem to me rather excessive.

The first nine chapters are devoted to photosynthesis and the related topics. The texts of the chapters are concise and to the point. In general, the chapters are well written and provide a solid introduction into selected topics such as photon absorption, electron transport processes, ATP generation, CO_2 assimilation, photorespiration, and C_4 and CAM metabolism.

This book is useful mainly for undergraduate students who need to be introduced into such a complex science as plant biochemistry is.

H. SYNKOVÁ (*Praha*)