Oropeza, C., Howard, F.W., Ashburner, G.R. (ed.): **Lethal Yellowing: Research and Practical Aspects.** - Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht - Boston - London 1995. Pp. 250. US $ 110.50. ISBN 0-7923-3723-9.

The coconut palm is a very important plant in the tropical regions, both as cash crop and in subsistence agriculture. Although most coconut production is dedicated to copra and its subsequent oil extraction, the number of products which can be obtained from the coconut palm is seemingly limitless. However, the coconut industry has several problems which affect its productivity, particularly: the use of unimproved planting material, the old age of existing plantations and various pests and diseases. This book deals with the most severe of the diseases, lethal yellowing. Lethal yellowing has killed millions of coconut palms in Latin America, Africa, India and Southeast Asia, poses a world-wide threat to coconut production. The papers of this book were presented in a symposium "Lethal Yellowing Research and Practical Aspects", which was held at Centro de Investigación Científica de Yucatán in November, 1993.

This book includes introductory papers (Section 1: Introduction to lethal yellowing) dealing with a brief history. Section 2 (Aspect of the disease) deals with various aspects of research which reveals how the pathogen kills palms, how the disease is spread and possibly why resistant palms are not affected. Section 3 (Diagnosis and detection) includes papers on development of new methodology (electron microscopy, DAPI fluorescence test, DNA probes and PCR) for the detection and diagnosis and its applications to basic research and practical usage. The most efficient way to deal with lethal yellowing is by planting resistant palms (Section 4: Control of lethal yellowing). Production of resistant hybrids and other aspects related to coconut genetic resources are presented in Section 5 (Genetic resources and improvement). This section also includes papers dealing with the reproductive biology and heredity of coconut palms, genetic markers and the safe movement of germplasm. The long generation time of coconut palms means that the production of improved planting materials cannot keep pace with the growing demand resulting from disease devastation or old age of plantations. Alternative techniques such as *in vitro* clonal propagation offer potential to speed up the process. Section 6 (*In vitro* tissue culture) deals with new advances in that field. Finally, the papers in Section 7 (Future directions for the coconut industry) present examples of how the coconut industry can be restructured to cope with calamities such as lethal yellowing and changing marked profiles.

Although the symposium was organised primarily with the objective of providing direction to combat the disease in México, the following conclusions are equally as relevant to other lethal yellowing-affected countries.

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