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Many people should be thanked for helping inspire this edition, but I will single out a few for particular mention. I am very grateful to all those who provided feedback on the first edition and I have tried to include as many of their comments/requests as possible. In particular, coverage of the rapidly developing area of plant virology has been greatly expanded. I am also grateful to my teaching colleagues in Leicester and elsewhere for their suggestions. Finally, the person who should perhaps receive most thanks is my long-suffering editor at Academic Press, Tessa Picknett.

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