

Preface

This book is intended to provide a general introduction to this exciting field of plant cell and tissue culture as tool in biotechnology, without overly dwelling on detailed descriptions of all aspects. It is aimed at the newcomer, but will hopefully also stimulate some new ideas for the "old hands" in tissue culture. Nowadays, with the vast amount of information readily available on the internet, our aim was rather to distill and highlight overall trends, deeming that a complete report of each and every tissue culture investigation and publication was neither possible, nor desirable. For some techniques, however, detailed protocols are given. We have tried to be as thorough as possible, and regret if we have inadvertently overlooked any pertinent literature or specific development that belong in this work.

The three authors have been associated for many years, and have worked together on various aspects in this field. Without this close interaction, this book would not have been possible. At this opportunity, we wish to reiterate our mutual appreciation of this fruitful cooperation. An Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung fellowship to Ashwani Kumar (University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India) to work in our group at the Institut für Pflanzenernaehrung der Justus Liebig Universität, Giessen, supported this close cooperation and the completion of this book, is gratefully acknowledged.

Such a book takes time to grow. Indeed, its roots lie in a 3–4 week lecture and laboratory course by one of us (K.-H.N.) about 30 years ago as visiting professor at Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt, which later led to the development of a graduate training unit at the University of Giessen, Germany, and other universities. So, also older key literature, nowadays risking being forgotten, has been considered, which could be of help for newcomers in this domain.

Thanks are due to our publisher for all the help received, and for patiently waiting for an end product that, we feel, has only gained in quality.

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