

Preface

We have been greatly encouraged by the generous reception given to the first edition. It appears to have been used both as an introductory text and by more experienced workers seeking concepts and quantitative values on topics outside their own field of expertise. In this revision, which is also to be translated into Japanese and Spanish, we have tried to keep both interests in mind. In respect of the first group, we have attempted to leaven the terseness with rather more general description, while still maintaining some compromise between a degree of coverage of the topics and size. For the second group, we have cited at the end of each chapter – in addition to useful more detailed treatments – some recent endeavours in the field of quantitative simulation. The accelerated march in this field over the past few years is most pleasing and we hope that the references cited will provide an introduction to the available literature.

We have used the system of SI units and its conventions more widely than previously although, possibly, not to the extent that its more ardent advocates would desire. The use of prefixes (defined in the section 'Units and conversion factors') rather than powers of 10 is commendable but frequently cubic quantities cannot be accommodated within this rule. To assist the reader we have included a list of the main symbols and also given the symbol used with the named entity in the index as well as the values of some common physical units. We have also included a glossary with summaries of some useful background information which is not always readily accessible and a list of conversion factors from some widely used established units to SI units.

We are particularly grateful to those who have drawn our attention to errors, ambiguities and omissions in the first edition. In particular, we are indebted to Dr Shu Fukai, who in the rigours of translating from English to Japanese, has made many valuable suggestions, Mrs M. Carruthers for her expert typing, and Mrs C. Richardson and Mr M. Bone for help with the figures. F.L.M. is particularly indebted to the Director and staff of the Glasshouse Crops Research Institute for their hospitality and many discussions; these greatly expedited the revision.

F.L.M.

J.M.

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