Preface and acknowledgements

The purpose of this volume is to present a broad, informed view of contemporary biotechnology, a technology with ancient roots and enormous future potential. We hope that it will prove valuable both to students of the subject and practitioners of research in specific aspects seeking a broader view. Clearly, it is not intended to be an advanced treatise but we believe that it is an authoritative introduction to most major aspects of biotechnology written by leading researchers. A substantial collection of references has been included after each chapter for those wishing to pursue more specialist studies.

The fact that this volume was first conceived by one of the editors some four years prior to publication is a measure of the pressure of time on many practising biotechnologists in recent years rather than of their slothfulness. During that period the number of editors grew from one to three and some manuscripts are still awaited! Perhaps they will make the next edition.

The editors are most grateful for the extreme forebearance shown by some of the contributors to this volume who originally offered manuscripts some three years prior to publication. We would also like to thank all contributors and the publishers for their efforts to make a success of a difficult project. We are delighted to have eventually 'got the act together' and sincerely hope that our readership will derive both knowledge and pleasure from this book.

The authors of Chapter 3 wish to thank Dr J. Edelman, Director of Research, RHM PLC, for permission to publish, and the management of the Frish Dytes Partnership for the release of information on MycoProtein. The authors of Chapters 4 and 6 acknowledge the assistance of Mrs D.P. Fowler in the preparation of diagrams.

The author of Chapter 9 is greatly indebted to the following colleagues at Rothamsted Experimental Station for photographs to illustrate the text of this chapter: Dr Barbara Mosse for Figs. 9.1 and 9.2; Dr D.S. Hayman for Figs 9.3–9.6; Dr M.G.K. Jones for Figs. 9.7 and 9.8; and Dr R. Nelson for Figs. 9.9 and 9.10.

Biotechnology Centre
Cranfield Institute of Technology
September 1984

I. J. Higgins
D. J. Best
J. Jones