



BOOK REVIEW

Characterization, conservation, evaluation and utilization of mushroom genetic resources for food and agriculture. J. E. Labarère and U. G. Menini (Eds.). 2000. The Global Network on Mushrooms, under the aegis of FAO, Bordeaux, France. 240 pp, illus. No ISBN.

Mushrooms represent an important biological resource of social, economic, and ecological significance. International meetings are therefore important to integrate information, scientific efforts, and regional experiences about mushrooms. In this book, the editors published the Proceedings of the First International Congress for the Characterization, Conservation, Evaluation and Utilization of Mushroom Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (March 9-13, 1998; Bordeaux, France). The congress was organized within the framework of The Global Network on Mushrooms (GNM), an element of the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources established by FAO in 1996. The preface outlines the work and main activities performed by the GNM, which is coordinated by Prof. Dr. J. Labarère.

There are three main sections: 1) Mushroom germplasm conservation and characterization, 2) Global mushroom genetic resources, and 3) Utilization of mushroom genetic resources and training activities. The first section has nine papers dealing with mushroom germplasm conservation, characterization, molecular analyses, screening for fungal metabolites, and environmental applications. The second section contains seven papers with descriptions of regional mushroom genetic resources, such as Africa, China, India, Brazil, Mexico, and the Ivory Coast. The third section shows six papers about the utilization of genetic resources for mushroom cultivation in developing countries, particularly Vietnam, India, and those from Africa, as well as for the possible conversion of lignocellulosics into feed.

Although it would have been interesting to provide a more exhaustive review of mushroom genetic resources in several papers, as well as author and subject indexes, this is indeed a thoroughly enjoyable and useful book for scholars and students.

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