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Review of *A Color Handbook of Diseases of Small Grain Cereal Crops* by T. D. Murray, D. W. Parry, and N. D. Cattlin

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A Color Handbook of Diseases of Small Grain Cereal Crops. T. D. Murray, D. W. Parry, and N. D. Cattlin. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1998. xvii+142 pp. Photos, bibliography, index. \$49.95 cloth (ISBN 0-8138-2529-6).

When I received *A Color Handbook of Diseases of Small Grain Cereal Crops*, the first thing that came to mind was "Do we really need another one of these books?" I went to my bookshelf and pulled out no fewer than eight volumes and pamphlets depicting wheat or small grain diseases with color photographs as an aid to identification. After reading the *Handbook*, however, I have concluded that two major features may make it one of my top two references in this area. Foremost is its outstanding gallery of, full-color pictures. Nigel Cattlin may well be our day's premier photographer of plant diseases. His photographs, eye-catching not only for their accuracy in showing symptoms but for their intense clarity, seem to jump off the page at the reader. They so engrossed me that I thumbed through the entire book my first time through just savoring them. First-class pictures are the most important item for any guide to identification. The excellent photographs of fungal spores, for example, will be particularly helpful to anyone trying to identify those pathogens with a microscope.

The second thing that excites me about this little book is its logical, non-nonsense arrangement of information. There are the usual table of contents and index, but also a general introduction about plant diseases and a surprisingly useful glossary. Focusing mainly on North America and Europe, the text accompanying each disease is informative, concise, and accurate. Though a few additional references and a larger bibliography would have pleased me, the references offered will certainly get someone into the literature.

One unique feature of the *Handbook* is the inclusion of a box in the upper right-hand corner of the first page on each disease showing at a glance which of the four major small grains the disease affects as well as its world distribution. Such information provides the reader with a useful prelude to a particular disease.

Anyone interested in small-grain diseases ought to give this book serious consideration. Although its price tag may be a bit high, its pictures alone justify the cost. Should a future revision be in the offing, the authors might well consider adding a CD-ROM containing pictures a purchaser could use during presentations. **William W. Bockus**, *Department of Plant Pathology, Kansas State University*.