

BOOK REVIEW

Orlikowski L.B., Lipa J.J., 2014.

Komitety ochrony roślin i ich rola w rozwoju ochrony roślin oraz integracji polskiego środowiska naukowego w latach 1924–2013.

[Plant Protection Committees and Their Roles in Both the Plant Protection Development and the Integration of the Scientific Community from 1924 to 2013]

Horticulture Research Institute, Skierniewice; Institute of Plant Protection – National Research Institute, Poznań; Plant Protection Committee of Polish Academy of Sciences, Warszawa; Poland, 155 pp. ISBN 978-83-7987-816-1

The authors of the book, Prof. Leszek B. Orlikowski (Ph.D.) and Prof. Jerzy J. Lipa (Ph.D.), are two active leaders who have served on the Plant Protection Committee since 1998 and who were Secretary and Chairman from 1996 to 2006, respectively. The book includes the general historical development of the institutions' and scientific disciplines' practical solutions in plant protection since XVI century in Poland. The content of the book, however, considerably exceeds the scope suggested by the title as can be seen in the following chapters: (1) "Plant Protection in Research Institutes and Higher Education Institutions in XIX and at the Beginning of the XX century"; (2) "Establishment of the Plant Protection Committee, and Plant Protection Progress During the Interwar Period"; (3) "Formation of the Polish Society of Plant Protection"; (4) "Reestablishment of the Polish Society of Plant Protection" and the largest chapter (5) "Reestablishment of the Plant Protection Committee at the Polish Academy of Sciences".

The book starts with fascinating examples of plant protection recommendations to control cereal diseases based on practical observations and indigenous farmer knowledge in the XVI century. The first recommendations on plant disease and pest control were developed based on scientific observations by lecturers and professors of those agricultural education institutions located on Polish territory in the XIX century. For the first time, plant protection was taught as a part of "Rural household" course at the Institute of Rural Household and Forestry, Puławy in the second half of 1860's and since 1869 as a separate course on "Botany", including plant pathology and entomology. The first plant pathology textbook "Choroby roślin gospodarczych, ich przyczyny i środki zaradcze" ["Disease in Crop Plants; the Causes and Suggested Corrective Methods"] by Sz. Kudelka was published in 1881. The Polish term of "ochrona roślin" [plant protection] was introduced for the first time by Michał Oczapowski. He was the distinguished agronomist and Head (1833–1853) of the Agronomy Institute in Marymont near Warsaw.

The first Plant Protection Committee was formed in the Ministry of Agriculture and State Property (Ministerstwo Rolnictwa i Dóbr Państwowych) in 1924. The formation of the committee indicated a recognition of the importance of plant protection by the government of

Renaissance Independent Poland. The Committee tasks were published in the quarterly journal "Plant Diseases and Pests" ["Choroby i szkodniki roślin"] as follows:

- publication of a journal on plant protection;
- informing farmers about the legislation on plant protection in Poland and abroad;
- dissemination of information on crop health in Poland;
- preparation of reports on the plant pathologist and entomologist activities.

The interwar period witnessed a rapid scientific development in plant protection and applied entomology at the institutions of higher education, and National Research Institute of Rural Household, and in the field experimental stations. Names of distinguished plant pathologists and entomologists of that period and their major contribution to plant protection in Poland are listed.

The Government Presidium of Poland by its 1957 decree (739/56) established Department V – Agriculture and Forestry Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences allowing the formation of the Plant Protection Commission, with Prof. Józef Kochman (Ph.D.), a plant pathologist, as the Chairman and Doc. Władysław Węgorek (Ph.D.), an entomologist, as Deputy Chairman. Doc. Henryk Sandner (Ph.D.), an ecologist, was chosen as the Commission Secretary. By decision of the plenary meeting of the Vth Department, and the final approval of the Scientific Secretariat of the Polish Academy of Sciences (14 April 1959), the Commission was upgraded to the status of Plant Protection Committee. The tasks of the newly created scientific Plant Protection Committee were determined as:

- conducting a thorough analysis of actual scientific output in the plant protection discipline;
- organising the first scientific conference with the objective of providing the direction for plant protection research;
- identifying those areas where plant protection is lacking, and then providing assistance where necessary;
- recommending and assisting in the nomination of candidates for international travels;
- cooperating with editors of scientific journals including plant protection publications;
- publication of our own journal;
- organising conferences and scientific sessions and
- supporting and allocating financial grants for research teams, especially those teams working on subjects where there is a shortage of research.

Professors Józef Kochman, Władysław Węgorek, and Henryk Sandner continued their duties till 1974. In the following terms, the Committee was led between (i) 1975–1995 by: Władysław Węgorek as the Chairman, Jerzy J. Lipa as Deputy, and Jan Boczek as the Secretary; between 1996–1998 by: Jerzy J. Lipa, Zbigniew Weber, and Jan Boczek, respectively; (iii) between 1998–2003 by: Jerzy J. Lipa, Edmund Niemczyk/Zbigniew Weber, and Leszek B. Orlikowski; (iv) between 2003–2007 by: Jerzy J. Lipa, Zbigniew Dąbrowski/Zbigniew Weber, and Leszek B. Orlikowski; between 2007–2011 by: Stefan Pruszyński, Zbigniew Dąbrowski/Zbigniew Weber, and Leszek B. Orlikowski, and between 2011–2014 by: Zbigniew T.

Dąbrowski, Henryk Pospieszny/Grzegorz Skrzypczak, and Leszek B. Orlikowski, respectively.

The term of references of the consecutive tenures of Committees was the major task of the first Committee. Included were the additional activities of weed science. Some general objectives were also included, such as: assistance in the evaluation of the research institutes; preparation of scientific and political information related to the development and implementation of plant protection national recommendations, knowing the opinions on education in the field of plant protection, knowing the opinion of candidates nominated to the Polish Academy of Sciences, and recommending candidates for scientific awards given by the Polish Academy of Sciences.

The chapters on the consecutive terms of the Plant Protection Committee (PPC) of the Polish Academy of Sciences between 1990–2013, were prepared as a calendar of their activities and memberships. Actual Committee members are listed in a number of scientific and plenary meeting tables, and members are documented by relevant group photographs of the Committee members.

The Warsaw Committee plenary meetings helped integrate the Polish plant protection specialists. In addition to these meetings, the meetings and conferences at various Polish research institutes and universities outside Warsaw, were implemented. They allowed the local research plant protection community to present their research facilities and achievements and stimulate personal contacts with those who were not Committee members.

It is interesting to note, that the Committee had financed 60 projects on plant protection between 1957–1993.

Detailed information on the development, status, and progress of scientific disciplines related to plant protection, including plant pathology, agricultural entomology, and weed science, are included: (i) S. Kryczyński and E. Cichocka – “Development of Plant Protection in Poland from 1984 to 1993”; (ii) L.B. Orlikowski, P. Sobiszewski, and S. Kryczyński – “Evaluation of Plant Pathology Research Progress in Poland from 1994 to 2003”; (iii) K. Adamczewski – “Evaluation of the Progress in Herbiology During the 1994–2003 Time Period”; (iv) Z.T. Dąbrowski – “Evaluation of the Research Progress in Various Disciplines of Applied Zoology”; (v) J.J. Lipa,

K. Adamczewski, Z.T. Dąbrowski, S. Kryczyński, L.B. Orlikowski, P. Sobiszewski – “Progress in Plant Protection During the 1994–2003 Time Period – the Evaluation of the Plant Protection Committee”.

Unfortunately, one of the important activities listed in the Committee regulations mentioned in the book – the preparation of statements on emerging new needs and problems in research and the organisation of plant protection institutions, is represented by only one document. This document deals with the preparation of human resources for implementation of the Directive 2009/128/WE on the sustainable use of pesticides and the mandatory implementation of Integrated Pest Management. The statement was prepared during the Committee plenary meeting on 16th February 2011 and issued as the response to the letter (8 December 2010) of the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. During the Committee meeting at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW, two universities (Lublin and Wrocław) reported the initiation of a Graduate and Postgraduate program in “Plant Medicine”. As I recall, two other important statements on the development and use of genetically modified crops resistant to pests and tolerant to herbicides, and on minor crop plant protection agents, were issued in recent years.

In summary, this unique historical book, well-illustrated with tables and group photos, documents the extensive activities and achievements of the Plant Protection Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The included agenda of meetings and the titles of conferences (Table 20) confirm that the Committee followed the world trends in modern plant protection research and development, and in dissemination to others. The leadership of the members in plant protection research and education, was recently confirmed by the Polish scientists’ preparation or enrichment of the national IPM recommendations for various crops, to meet the requirements of the Directive 2009/128/WE in Poland.

The book was published due to the generous financial support of the BASF Chemical Company, confirming the industry’s support for development and implementation of sustainable plant protection products and methods.

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