

## **Book review**

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### **Környezet- és természetvédelmi lexikon (Encyclopaedia of environmental and natural protection) Vol. I-II**

LÁNG (Ed. in Chief)

Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 2002, ISBN 963 05 7847 6, 664+567 pages

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup>, revised edition of the original encyclopaedia published in 1993. The encyclopaedia deals with the scientific, technical and legal aspects of environmental and natural protection and their effect on the society. In the revised edition 362 authors worked to update the entries, and it contains over 9500 catchwords, half of them either actualised or entirely new. It also contains the newest national and international regulations, directives and acts, the EU requirements are specifically considered. The concept of the book is to give an comprehensive knowledge of the natural environment, its situation, problems and tasks of the Carpathian Basin, therefore it can be successfully used in the surrounding countries, too.

The up-to-date management requires environmental approach in designing a food processing factory considering its two-ways connection with the environment (e.g. use of water, its quantity and quality, the emission of contaminants into the surface waters, air, etc.). Treatment of waste water, dangerous wastes (produced mainly during processing foods of animal origin; but we also should think about the wastes originating from the cleaning and disinfecting materials, packaging materials, fuels, etc.) is a continuous problem of the food industry. One side of the story is, that food industry should be as “environmentally friendly” as possible. The other side is that our food cannot be disregarded from our environment. Now we learn more and more about the effect of food components on our health, both advantageous and disadvantageous. We know, for instance that our food might contain high amount of heavy metals coming from soil contaminated sometimes due to the human activity. Some food components are beneficial because of their antioxidant, antibacterial, etc. activity, and some are used as non-medicinal curatives. The change in the growing conditions (soil, irrigation water, climate, as well as the applied technology, fertilisation, etc., highly influence the quality of food industrial raw materials. The application of chemical plant protection and the use of hormones and others in animal husbandry result in the undesirable chemical residues in food products. The relatively new organic- or bio-production both in plant production and animal husbandry tries to solve this problem. Since we know for long that up-to-date food processing should apply the “from farm to fork” and from “stable to table” concepts to ensure the safety of our food, it also means that environmental considerations are as important as other, e.g. the economical approach. In the encyclopaedia one can find the most important expressions with adequate explanations, like waste and waste-water treatments, distribution and accumulation of elements in the biosphere, environmental hygiene, agro-environmental protection. HACCP, GMOs, biodegradation, biodegradable packaging materials, methods, technologies, eco-disaster, environmental contamination and many others directly or indirectly connected to the agriculture and food. In some cases the English naming is also given. National and international directives and acts are also referred

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to. In the appendix one can find the list of the most important environmental and natural protection institutions, the universities and high schools where specific education can be obtained, as well as the lists of protected plants and animals in Hungary and in Europe. Useful web-sites are also reported.

Of course, the entries cannot go into details, nevertheless they gave enough information to go further to specific professional sources. It also helps for professionals and laymen to develop an ecological and environmental attitude in their way of thinking. The book is beautifully designed with over 100 tables, nearly 400 figures, 62 maps and c. 1000 photos. The online version is planned and it shall be continuously revised and actualised. More information is available on the publisher web-side: [www.akkrt.hu](http://www.akkrt.hu)

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