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BIOPROCESS DEVELOPMENTS

Advances in Biotechnological Processes, Volume 4. Edited by A. Mizrahi and A. L. van Wezel. Pp. 372. ISBN 0-8451-3202-2, \$84.00. (Alan R. Liss, Inc., New York: 1985).

The series of *Advances in Biotechnological Processes*, of which this is the fourth volume in two years, reflects the realization that before the potential benefits of modern biotechnology can be reaped in the form of usable products, production processes have to be developed, which are scientifically sound, technologically feasible and economically viable.

This series has by now acquired a clear character. It is mainly devoted to processes employing whole cells, procaryotes as well as eucaryotes, and covers the current developments in what have been traditionally called fermentation technologies. Each review is written by an investigator who deals with their own field of interest, from their own point of view. Authors are apparently given a free hand in the choice of material, scope, and manner of presentation. As a result the reviews bear the personal imprint of their authors. This introduces some bias, but at the same time makes these reviews much easier to read and much more instructive than the stereotyped and sterile "comprehensive" review.

The current volume is rather heterogeneous in subject matter and style. The description of electrofusion is a lucid and very well balanced presentation of fundamentals, methodology and future perspectives of this novel technique of cell hybridization. The coverage of the genetic engineering of lymphoblastoid interferons, on the other hand, is very long and overburdened with technical details, unnecessary for the non-experts and largely known to the experts. The reviews of microbiological topics and plant cell culture keep to essentials and present overviews of specific topics well blended with the individual interests of the authors. On the whole the articles in this volume are informative and easy to read. They can serve as good starting material for students and investigators, who wish to get acquainted with new areas of application of biotechnology.

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