

## Book Review

B. Bowman & R. Russell, *Present Knowledge in Nutrition*. Vol. 2. Washington DC: International Life Sciences Institute, 2006, ISBN 9781578811991.

This, the second volume of *Present Knowledge in Nutrition* (9th edition), is similar in format and style to the first. It is a compilation of short review articles focusing on a wide range of nutritional topics including: nutrition and the life cycle; nutritional immunity; nutrition and chronic diseases; diet, food and nutrition; public health nutrition and international nutrition; and emerging issues. Each article is focused on specific points, covering the essentials of the topic. Helpfully, each article is fully referenced, making cross referencing and further study on the topics quick and easy.

I started by reading topics that I have direct experience of, specifically 'diet, food and nutrition' and 'public health & international nutrition'. The first of these sections contains chapters on food composition, dietary intake, taste and food selection, energy intake, obesity, and eating behaviours, strategies for changing eating and exercise behaviour, nutrition monitoring in the United States and international dietary standards: FAO and WHO. These chapters were particularly informative, albeit a little 'American-centric'. In 'public health & international nutrition', I found the chapters on the emergence of diet-related chronic diseases in developing countries particularly informative with regard to the impact of nutrition transition. Food security was covered with an excellent case study from the USA, relaying its importance outside of the developing world, and this section was rounded off with a critique of nutrition in complex emergencies.

The sections on nutrition and the life cycle, nutritional immunity and nutrition and chronic diseases, which I have less experience of, were informative and well written and made enjoyable reading.

A good reference text, I found this book pitched to varying degrees between general nutrition textbooks and high impact,

peer-reviewed articles. My only disappointment in the content was that the food chain was not adequately covered and that the so-called new nutrition science<sup>1</sup> and biological diversity for food and nutrition<sup>2</sup> were not included in emerging issues. It is also clear that this book does not stand alone – it is necessary to also own volume 1 for a complete overview of the field. This book is written mostly by North American academics, so readers should not expect European reference standards or concepts to be included.

At a cost of US \$140 for both volumes from International Life Sciences Institute ([www.ilsa.org](http://www.ilsa.org)) to your desk in Europe, these books represent good value and there is no excuse for postgraduate students and those teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels not to have both volumes close to hand as they are an invaluable resource.

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### References

1. Beauman C, Cannon G, Elmadfa I, *et al.* (2005) The principles, definition and dimensions of the new nutrition science. *Public Health Nutr* **8**, 695–698.
2. Johns T & Eyzaguirre PB (2005) Linking biodiversity, diet and health in policy and practice. *Proc Nutr Soc* **65**, 182–189.