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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Biology - Botany

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The following review appeared in the July 2012 issue of CHOICE:

49-6283 SB357 2011-35559 CIP
Phillips, Michael. **The holistic orchard: tree fruits and berries the biological way.** Chelsea Green, 2012 (c2011). 414p
bibl index ISBN 9781933392134 pbk, \$39.95; ISBN 9781603584074 e-book, contact publisher for price

The Holistic Orchard is a breath of fresh air in a genre too often characterized by occult mysticism and/or an air of moral superiority. Phillips (*The Apple Grower*, 2005), a farmer/orchardist with many years of experience, is a pragmatist, not a polemicist; he successfully covers topics ranging from plant biology and ecology to the realities and economics of niche markets. The author presents a challenge to backyard fruit growers and community orchardists to produce healthy, quality fruits organically. Phillips begins by discussing the soil and finishes with marketing his fruit at the production site. The text reflects his infectious enthusiasm, his deep understanding of the positive and negative impacts of natural organisms on his trees, and his commitment to hard work and critical thinking. The author addresses the challenges of dealing with disease and insect and animal pests along with the need to accommodate trees' annual needs for nutrients; he uses approaches that seek to promote within orchards a diversity of beneficial organisms as well as methods that promote the plant's immunological response via phytoalexins. This book is richly photographed and contains well-placed sidebars with pertinent information. It was a delight to read. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. All undergraduate students, general readers, and professionals/practitioners. --G. S. Howell, *emeritus, Michigan State University*