

Foreword

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This book is the product of the collective knowledge accumulated over 3 decades by hundreds of agricultural professionals and scientists involved in the fight against two of the worst pests of all times: whiteflies and whitefly-transmitted viruses. Millions of farmers affected by these pests have also contributed a great deal of valuable information regarding the nature of the problem and the extent of the damage caused by these pests in important food and industrial crops. Examples of such are: cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz), common bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.), sweetpotato (*Ipomoea batatas* [L.] Lam.), lima bean (*Phaseolus lunatus* L. var. *lunatus*), mung bean (*Vigna radiata* [L.] R. Wilczek), tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum* Mill.), peppers (*Capsicum* spp. L.), squash (*Cucurbita moschata* Duchesne), melon (*Cucumis melo* L.), other cucurbits, cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* L.), tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum* L.), soybean (*Glycine max* [L.] Merr.), lettuce (*Lactuca sativa* L. var. *capitata* L.) and eggplant (*Solanum melongena* L.).

The devastating capacity of these pests, and their global distribution in

the main tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world, has been a major challenge to agricultural scientists in both developing and industrialized nations. Obviously, their impact has been far greater in the rural areas of developing countries, where resource-poor farmers have lost both traditional food crops (e.g., common bean and cassava) and cash crops (e.g., tomato and peppers) to these pests. Most of the national agricultural research institutes and ministries of agriculture in the developing countries affected by these pests have implemented different whitefly control measures, including legal measures, which constitute a unique event in the history of most developing countries where agriculture in general is not regulated by the state.

The research activities described in this book provide a general view of the problem for agricultural scientists and laypeople alike, and contributes a great deal of pertinent information on the nature and management of the problem in the different crops affected by whiteflies and whitefly-transmitted viruses. In doing so, the Tropical Whitefly Integrated Pest Management Project (TWF-IPM) has paid considerable attention to agricultural sustainability, ecosystem health and human health issues, related to the appalling misuse of highly toxic pesticides associated with whitefly control practices in developing countries.

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The information contained in the following chapters will form the basis of a worldwide effort aimed at disseminating the knowledge accumulated on the nature of the whitefly/virus problems and the most efficient integrated pest and disease management measures available to develop sustainable mixed cropping

systems. Moreover, this knowledge should ultimately contribute to improve the livelihoods of resource-poor farmers affected by these pests throughout the tropics, by safeguarding their food staples and high-value crops, reducing production costs and pesticide contamination, and increasing their family income.