Special Issue

Optimising Practices for Crops in Protected Cultivation

Message from the Guest Editor

Protected cultivation describes horticultural crops, grown intensively under covered structures and supplied with water and nutrients via fertigation. Crops can be planted in soil, or in a hydroponic channel or container system, with or without substrate. Since the 1990s, the area under protected cultivation has increased globally by more than five-fold, and this area continues to increase as arable land becomes limited and as growers adopt these systems to increase yield and quality, and to mitigate pests, diseases, and climate variability. Advances have been made in agronomic practices and in plant breeding to increase the productivity and quality of produce grown in protected cultivation, such as using weighing lysimeters to measure changes in pot weight for estimating crop water use, and the development of cucumber varieties that do not require pollination. However, research and development is needed to address ongoing challenges, including optimising practices for new crops, and developing solutions to manage climate extremes and nutrient-rich drainage.

Guest Editor

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Deadline for manuscript submissions

closed (30 November 2020)

Agronomy

an Open Access Journal by MDPI

Impact Factor 3.4
CiteScore 6.7

mdpi.com/si/35817

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