

BACTERIAL WILT RESISTANT BANANAS

THE RESEARCH

A consortium of research organizations, led by Uganda's National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) was formed to use agricultural biotechnology to develop cooking banana varieties with resistance to banana bacterial wilt (BXW).

CURRENT STATUS

A gene that offers resistance to bacterial wilt was got from sweet pepper and inserted into two local banana varieties: Nakitembe and M9.

The cooking bananas developed, have so far presented 100% resistance to BXW at screen house and confined field trial levels. Researchers are now ready to test the first generation of cooking bananas with resistance to BXW in multi-location field trials within Uganda commencing 2016.

GOING FORWARD

Once research is completed, the BXW resistant banana varieties will be thoroughly reviewed and authorized by regulatory bodies in Uganda for growing and consumption.

PARTNERSHIPS

Research on BXW resistant bananas is part of the Agricultural Biotechnology Support Project II, a collaboration between scientists at NARO Uganda and Cornell University (USA). The project is supported by USAID.

The need

- BXW has no chemical treatment. Once a banana plant gets infected, the farmer must uproot and destroy it.
- 75% of farmers in Uganda grow bananas for food and income security; covering 1.8 million hectares.
- All cultivated banana varieties and their wild relatives are susceptible to BXW.
- Uganda has the highest annual consumption of bananas in the world - 240kg per capita.

US$953M

If BXW is not contained, it is estimated that the country is likely to lose US$953 million worth of bananas at present value.

The reverse is definately true. If bacterial wilt is contained, Uganda stands to gain US$953 million from the sale of bananas annually.

Contact us

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