

Banana



Common Name: Banana

Scientific Name: *Musa*

Climate: Temperate and hot. It needs a warm climate with an average temperature of 27 °C

Plant Description: The banana plant is a large perennial herb although we normally think of it as a tree. As such, it does not have a trunk but pods that start from the root. It can grow up to seven meters tall. It is the plant with the longest leaves that reach up to three meters in length and have a bright green color. The fruit has a green, yellow or reddish color.¹

Cultivation: Being a tropical plant, the banana needs full sun and a large amount of water for maximum productivity. Bananas grow and produce fruit in poor soil conditions, but will be less productive without deep, well-drained soil.

Banana trees do not grow from a seed but from bulbs or rhizomes that are planted two meters from each other. It needs a lot of organic matter, so it is recommended to apply one or two kilos of fertilizer when planting.

They produce their first fruits and can be harvested within 11 to 12 months after planting. Bananas are available year-round - they don't have a growing "season". They last between six to 15 years.²



Uses: The banana is a good source of fiber and

energy as well as being an excellent source of potassium and vitamin B6. It helps with depression and mood swings, bone and eye health. There are a large number of creole varieties and it is important to continue using them. The leaf is used to wrap tamales.

They are widely used in coffee plantations for shade. It also grows well alongside coconut and cocoa.

Pests and Diseases: The screw worm and the cottony mealybug are two common banana pests. Both can be controlled through clearing, stripping, and unlocking.³

Panama disease is the most important because it affects the Cavendish variety or the most common banana variety. It represents such a huge threat that it could wipe out this strain in about twenty years. That is why the conservation of the other varieties is so important. However, there are indications that the cultivation of cassava together with the banana tree may protect it from the fungus that causes Panama disease.⁴

References:

1. <https://www.flores.ninja/platano/>
2. https://www.infoagro.com/documentos/el_cultivo_del_platano__banano_.asp
3. https://repository.agrosavia.co/bitstream/handle/20.500.12324/2095/40195_24824.pdf?sequence=1
4. <https://theconversation.com/the-quest-to-save-the-banana-from-extinction-112256>

En español: Plátano

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