

Disease-resistant cloned bananas in development Australia

An Israeli agricultural biotechnology company is looking to trial tissue cultured banana varieties in major Australian growing areas and to collaborate on developing a variety resistant to Panama disease.

Several North Queensland growers, hosted by Haifa Australia and Lindsay Rural, recently visited the plant propagation, selection and breeding company, Rahan Meristem, located near Israel's north-west border with Lebanon.

While it could be some time before the company's varieties are commercially available in Australia, the growers were excited with the opportunity to access its tissue cultured technologies for the local industry.

Rahan Meristem, regarded as one of the world's leading exporter of tissue cultured banana and plantain, also hopes to work with researchers and growers to develop a Panama Tropical Race 4 (TR4) resistant variety.

Meristem takes superior clones of leading cultivated idio-types and evaluates them for increased yield and fruit quality in tropical and subtropical climates.

This results in preferred selections of pest and disease-free banana cultivars and plants capable of increasing plantation profits.

Lindsay Rural north Queensland regional manager Shane O'Flanagan agreed Meristem's continuous selection to identify the best performing varieties and its moves to develop types tolerant of TR4 were impressive.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: Israeli 'clone' bananas coming to Aus