

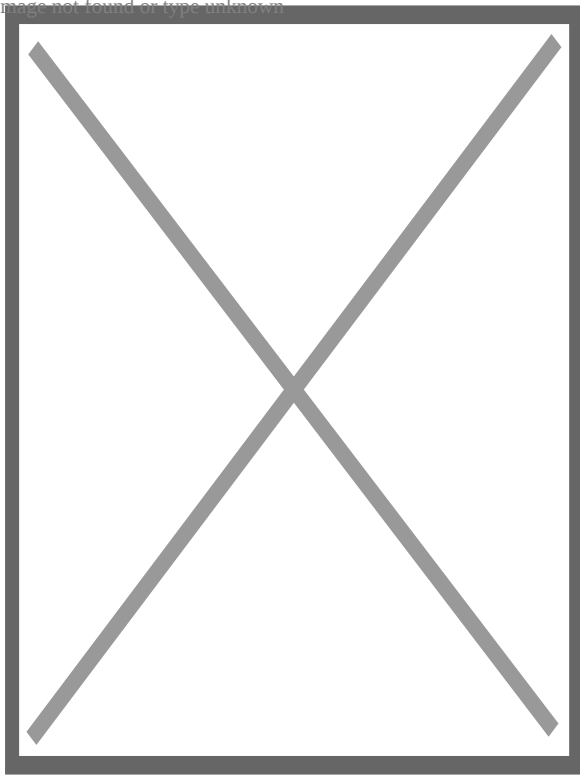
Uganda launches field trial of GMO bananas resistant to wilting disease

This banana has been engineered to resist bacterial xanthomonas wilt (BXW). The gene that conferred resistance is from [sweet pepper](#).

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[C]urrently all banana species, wild and domestic, are susceptible to BXW so there is no source of resistance within the banana species. That is why scientists had to look elsewhere, specifically sweet pepper, in order to get resistance for BXW. They went head to utilize the tools of biotechnology — genetic engineering — to transfer that resistance to bananas.

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Cornell Alliance for Science fellow
Patricia Nanteza with BMX-resistant
bananas, currently in field trials. (Photo:
Cornell Alliance for Science)

In Uganda, BXW was first discovered in 2001 and spread rapidly throughout the central, southwest and western parts of the country, which are major banana growing areas. At its peak in 2007, the disease had caused the loss of 67 percent of Uganda's plantations.

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Sixty lines, which tested 100 percent resistance to BXW during the confined field trial, were planted during

the first multi-location trial....

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[I]t is currently illegal to grow GM crops in farmer fields, hence the restriction to agricultural research stations. However, this will change the moment the National Biosafety and Biotechnology Bill, from 2012, is signed into law.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [GM BWX-resistant bananas start their journey to the farmer](#)