

## Orange-colored bananas? New variety packed with 10x the vitamin A developed in Uganda provides essential nutrients for children and pregnant women – if approved

Scientists began breeding the bananas in 2010 to address the challenges of lack of nutrients in food.

Addressing journalists at MbZARDI on [October 1], the trial site manager, Mr Isaac Magumba, said the scientists determined that a number of rural communities, particularly in western Uganda, are deficient in vitamin A and iron.

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He added that the scientists felt that it was better to incorporate vitamin A into food which can be grown by the affected communities and consumed directly rather than encouraging pregnant women and mothers to buy vitamin A and iron tablets.

He said their research has shown promising results, with the transgenic banana variety having 100 percent vitamin A content. The fortified variety has a more golden colour when compared with ordinary bananas.

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Further confirmation came from the field trial sites because the flesh of the fortified banana is orange in color. There is also an orange color expression deep in the leaves, meaning the gene inserted is fully integrated to the plants.

The existing vitamin A content in local banana varieties is 3-6 micrograms but the current selected varieties contain 35 micrograms suitable for human health.

The team has also ensured that the banana plant grows true to the traditional type with the initial traits remaining intact apart from introduction of vitamin A gene.

**[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here](#)**