

Australia is first country to approve genetically engineered banana, modified to resist disease

Queensland researchers have just received news over 20 years in the making – their genetically modified banana species called QCAV-4 [has been approved](#) by Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ).

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This makes it the first whole genetically modified fruit assessed and approved by FSANZ and the first GM banana approved in the world.

QCAV-4 is genetically modified to be resistant to Panama Disease tropical race 4 (TR4) which has decimated banana markets around the world.

“TR4 is caused by a soil-borne fungus that stays in the ground for more than 50 years, wiping out banana crops and destroying farms for generations,” said [Queensland University of Technology Tropical Crops professor James] Dale.

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The banana is a normal Cavendish banana with a single changed gene called RGA2. This gene is from a wild, south-east Asian banana called *Musa acuminata ssp malaccensis*.

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Currently, the researchers have no plans to commercialise the GM banana in Australia, but instead it’s to be used as a safety net if T4R hits Queensland.

For the next steps for QCAV-4, Food Standards Australia New Zealand has notified the Food Ministers’ Meeting that it has been approved. The meeting has 60 days to request a review, or the banana will be allowed to be sold.

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