• Crop hygiene- any farm implement used for pruning should be disinfected between banana stools.
• Plant resistance - Use resistant banana varieties in areas with panama disease.

Resistant “Apple” banana varieties

The following are resistant “Apple” banana varieties:
• GT
• Prata – Manyatta, Soth, Exera and Kifutu Mysore.

Uproot all panama disease affected “Sukari Ndizi” stools and replace with any of the resistant varieties named above. There is no difference in taste between GT “Apple” and the preferred Sukari Ndizi” “Apple” banana.
Introduction

Fusarium wilt or panama disease is a serious problem of banana production in Nyanza, Western, Central, Eastern and Coast Provinces of Kenya.

The disease particularly affects “Apple” bananas or “Sukari Ndizi” but other bananas such as Gros Michel or Bogoya, Bokoko and Silk are also affected to a lesser extent.

The disease can wipe out the entire banana crop of susceptible variety.

Disease causing organism and spread

The disease is caused by Fusarium fungus which is known to survive in the soil and on plant waste.

It enters the plant roots through bruises and then spreads to the whole plant via the pseudostem.

Control methods

The main control methods for panama disease include:

- Plant quarantine- ensure that no movement of planting material from affected regions to other areas occurs.
- Cultural control- burn or bury all diseased crop residue practise crop rotation so that the fungus can die.

Signs of the disease

Panama disease affected plants show yellowing of leaves starting with the oldest leaves. Some of the leaves will droop and become brown and dry. Other leaves may remain erect but soon turn yellow then brown and dry.

In some cases the outer leaf sheaths of the pseudostem may split longitudinally near the soil level.