

- Prepare a nursery bed and apply compost manure.
- Mulch with dry grass to keep the soil moist.
- Water the suckers twice a day for the first week and once a day for the next 2 weeks to allow root growth.
- Cut off the new suckers and plant in the nursery.
- Transplant suckers to the field after 4-6 months.



Cutting new suckers



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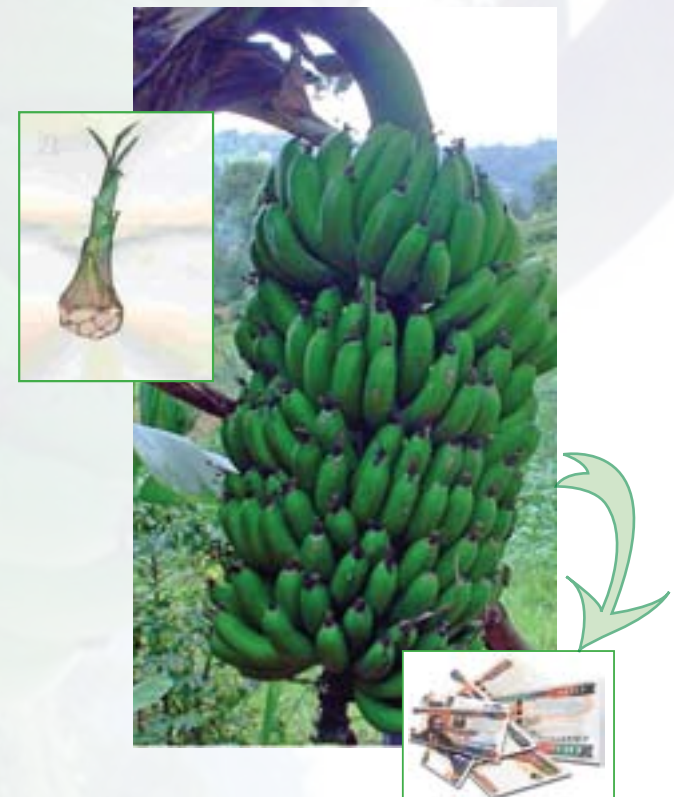
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How to multiply clean banana planting material from existing plants



Introduction

Banana is a major staple food crop in Kenya. However, its production has been declining due to poor management practices, pests and diseases and lack of clean planting materials.

What are clean banana planting materials?

These are pest and disease free plants.

Why use clean planting materials?

- Reduce spread of pests and diseases
- Reduced chemical use on disease / pest management
- Produce bigger and better bunches
- Fetch better market prices
- Generate income from sale of suckers
- Improve family income.

Where to get clean planting materials

Banana orchards with healthy and pest free banana plants.

How to produce clean planting materials?

After selecting the desired banana variety, prepare the suckers as follows:

a) Sword sucker

Select a healthy sucker (30-100 cm or 1-3 ft high) with narrow leaves.

b) Maiden sucker

Select a sucker of about 1.5m (4.5 ft) high for taller varieties and 1 m (3 ft) high for medium varieties.

c) The sucker multiplication technique

Remove all roots and cut off all parts showing signs of insect or disease damage from a selected sucker.



Remove roots and damaged parts

Hot water treatment

Heat water to 55°C and this can be tested with candle wax stuck on a stick with melts if dipped in the water.



Heating water



Candle test

Remove water from heat and dip the suckers in it for 20 minutes.



Dipping suckers

Planting in container

- Fill a big perforated container (quarter drum) with clean sawdust and sprinkle water on it.
- Place the treated sucker in the middle of the container and ensure that the saw dust covers the corm.



Clean sucker



Sucker in container with corm covered

- After 6 days, check to see if new suckers are growing from the corm.



Sprouting suckers

- Keep watering everyday for two weeks or until the suckers are ready for transplanting.