

Mini-symposium. The first Wageningen Banana Day (15:20-17:30, Tuesday November 18, 2014)  
Location: Orion building, room C2006

### **The threat of Panama disease to banana trade and food security: a global problem demanding global public goods**

Mini-symposium in the afternoon (15:20-17:30 hours), with debates about:

- The need to monitor spread and manifestation of plant diseases
- The balancing act between single recipes and multiple solutions
- The collaboration between different actors in food provision

Invited speakers from the private and public sector and researchers will start conversations about these issues, and there is ample opportunity to engage the audience in the discussion.

#### **The issue**

Banana is a major traded agricultural crop, and one of the major staple crops. Most production takes place in Asia, with more than 50% of the global production, mostly for subsistence or local markets. Plantain production is concentrated in Africa, representing >70% of the global production. In the Americas, banana production is well known for its contribution to the global export market. Less known is the production of plantains and bananas for local markets. The international banana trade is dominated by Cavendish clones.

The recent outbreak and dissemination of a new strain of the Panama disease fungus *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *cubense* – the so-called Tropical Race 4 (TR4) - confronts banana producers and consumers with a global problem. TR4 widely destroys bananas destined for domestic and international markets, spreads rapidly in Southeast Asia, and currently disseminates into other continents such as Africa, Western Asia and the Middle-East. Panama disease does not respect national borders and does not discriminate between large scale plantations and smallholder producers or backyard farmers. Hence, TR4 is a huge concern for the global export banana sector, but may exert an even greater impact on the domestic production of this food crop and threaten rural livelihoods.

Panama disease is a global problem, and its current spread urges all stakeholders to find solutions. The threat to the international trade has mobilized strong commitment from international and national companies to invest in research and collaboration with other actors. Yet, despite its status as a major food resource - only 15% of the global production is exported - banana still lacks a global public research structure such as for rice, maize, and wheat. Thus the current threats to banana production clearly raise the question how these relate to the availability of global public goods and how this affects collaboration between different interests as well as between private and public domains.

#### **The questions for debate**

- *Sharing and using information*
  - o How is the dissemination of Panama disease monitored?
  - o How is the exchange of information and materials arranged in the banana sector?
- *Finding solutions*
  - o How are solutions developed and selected in the banana sector?
  - o How are different recipes, such as enhancing resistance of bananas through breeding (including trans/cisgenesis) and building multiple solutions rooted in diversity, combined?
  - o How are different time horizons balanced in research and development?

- *Linking actors*

- o How do we tailor R&D agenda's and management strategies to both agro-export models (with larger returns on investment in research) and local food provision?
- o How do we make use of the leverage that the export sector can create to sustain the role of banana in food security?
- o How do make global public goods accessible to a variety of actors?

**Program**

15:20 – 15:30	1. Introduction: what is at stake and what will be discussed?	Sietze Vellema (chair) (Knowledge, Technology & Innovation group, Wageningen University)
15:30 – 15:45	2. Tracing what happens and sharing information and materials between local and global levels a. Making diagnostic tools a public good available for different actors	Hanneke Hermans (Triple20)
15:45 – 16:15	3. Combining multiple solutions in one strategy a. Using diversity as context and solution: insights from Costa Rica and Uganda  b. Reconciling short term responses and long-term R&D strategies	Jetse Stoorvogel (Soil Geography and Landscape group, Wageningen University)  Jim Lorenzen (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation)
16:15 – 16:30	SHORT BREAK	
16:30 – 17:00	4. Reconciling multiple interests in one area: trade and food security a. Articulating fair trade with local food provision  b. Embedding global value chains in local dynamics and production regions	Hans – Willem van der Waal (AgroFair) / Luud Clercx (Technical Assistance for Sustainable Trade & Environment - TASTE)  Annelot van Leeuwen (Solidaridad)
17:00 – 17:15	5. Looking backward and forward: what does the history of the banana sector tell us?	Ivan Buddenhagen (emeritus professor University of California – Davis)
17:15 – 17:25	6. Wrapping up	Gert Kema (Plant Research International - Wageningen UR)
17:30	Snacks and drinks In <i>The Spot</i> , ground floor Orion building	