

TIMELY INFORMATION

Agriculture & Natural Resources

Research Initiated to Evaluate the Feasibility of Growing Bananas in Alabama

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A new banana variety research plot was recently established at the Auburn University's Plant Science Research Center in Auburn (Figure 1). Banana plants were provided earlier this spring by Dr. Greg Fonsah, an Extension Ag-Economist and international banana production and marketing veteran from the UGA.



Figure 1. New banana trial established at the Plant Science Research Center, AU

The major objective is to introduce a new specialty crop in the southeast region, evaluate cultivar performance, and provide new agricultural technologies for interested commercial and backyard growers.

Banana plant has a multi-faceted importance and can be used in many different ways. The fresh fruit can be used as dessert. Banana fruit can be cooked, fried or eaten ripe with stew. They can be used to produce beer, livestock forage, cooking wraps and plates, can be utilized as shade trees and for medicinal purposes. Banana fruit has low fat, cholesterol, sodium and salt content, and is extremely rich in potassium. The plants can be used for their attractive ornamental qualities in the landscape.

Short-season cultivars tested include "Cacambou" and "Blue Torres Straight Island", and the conventional season banana cultivars planted consist of "Kummunaba", "Raja Puri", "Belle", and "Kandarian".

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