Banana diversity in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is host to a diversity of bananas that occupy different ecological niches. The diversity also reflects preferences in fruit size, shape, colour and aroma as well as nutritional, medicinal and cultural values. Both dessert and cooking cultivars are grown. Commercial growers usually remove the male bud after the last hands have set.

The Bengali word for banana is kola. It often follows the name of a cultivar. This page aims to document the country's diversity, starting with the most important ones.

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Sagor

Sagor (AAA genome\(^1\)) is the most popular dessert banana in Bangladesh. It is also known as Amrit Sagor or Amritsagar. The plant is medium-sized and cannot withstand strong wind. The ripe banana develops a bright yellow colour. The average bunch has 5-7 hands and 12-13 fingers in each hand\(^1\).

Raamsagor is the most famous Sagor for its large size, test and flavour.

Sabri

Sabri (AAB genome\(^1\)) is also known as Malbhog, Onupam and Martaman. It is a popular dessert cultivar, widely grown in the north and western areas of Bangladesh. This tall plant has a yellowish
green pseudostem with brownish blotches. The margins of the petiole and leaf sheath are reddish. The average bunch weight is about 10 kg. A bunch contains 85-120 fingers. Fruits are medium-sized. The peel is thin and the pulp is ivory-yellow in colour. Its texture is firm and taste sweet. However, hard lumps sometimes form in the pulp and the ripe fruits drop easily.

This cultivar is highly susceptible to Fusarium wilt.

Kobri

Kobri (AB genome) is also known as Kabri, Bangla, Shail, Thutae and Manua. The fruits of this hardy plant are very sweet but sometimes contain seeds. The peel is light yellow in colour.

Chini Champa

Chini Champa or Champa (AAB genome) is one of the hardiest and tallest cultivar grown in the country. Its cultivation is especially widespread in the Chittagong and Chittagong Hill districts. It can be grown under rain-fed condition or with minial irrigation. Its fruits are small and have a thin peel. The pulp is creamy in colour and its taste is sub-acid. The fruits turn golden yellow when ripe and keep well. The bunch contains 150-250 fingers and weighs about 16 kg.

The plant is resistant to Fusarium wilt and fairly resistant to Bunchy top.

Mehersagar

Mehersagar (AAA genome) is a medium-dwarf cultivar. Its fruits are large and have a greenish to dull yellow colour when ripe. The flesh is very soft and sweet. The keeping quality of fruits is poor and the market price is less. The average bunch weight is about 15 kg. It is susceptible to leaf spot diseases.

Agniswar

The cultivar is favored for its pink color, good scent and sweetness.

Gerasundari

Kanthali Kola

This variety is common in the country's southern districts and popular for its flavour which is reminiscent of jackfruit, hence Kanthali, a derivation of Kanthal, the Bengali name for jackfruit. It is used as a home remedy for treating disentry.

BARI Kola-1

BARI-1 is a high yielding banana cultivar (AAA genome) introduced to farmers by the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI). The cultivar yields 150-200 bananas per stalk, has a good in flavour and is resistant to Bunchy top and black leaf streak.
Atia Kola contains soft seeds. It is generally consumed by young people. It provides relief against constipation and intestinal disorders. The boiled and mashed inflorescence and pseudostem of the young plant are also consumed.

Bichi Kola also has soft seeds. It is found throughout the country, near roadsides and footpaths.

Kacha Kola, also known as Anaji Kola, is the most commonly found plantain in the country. The fruit is rich in iron and the inflorescence has a good anti-diabetic effect.

References


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