Pseudostem

The pseudostem is the part of the banana plant that looks like a trunk. It is formed by the tightly packed overlapping leaf sheaths. Even though the pseudostem is very fleshy and consists mostly of water, it is quite sturdy and can support a bunch that weighs 50 kg or more. The pseudostem continues to grow in height as the leaves emerge one after the other and reaches its maximum height when the inflorescence emerges at the top of the plant.

Contents

- Descriptors
- References

Descriptors

List of the pseudostem-related descriptors used to characterize banana plants[1].

6.2.1 Pseudostem height
(From the base of the pseudostem to the base of the peduncle)
1. ≤2 m
2. 2.1 to 2.9 m
3. ≥3 m

6.2.2 Pseudostem aspect
(Girth at 1 meter)
1. Slender
2. Normal
3. Robust

6.2.3 Pseudostem colour
(Overall colour of the pseudostem, without taking into account the colour of the old dried leaf sheaths)
1. Green-yellow
2. Medium green
3. Green
4. Dark green
5. Green-red
6. Red
7. Red-purple
8. Blue
9. Chimerical
10. Brown/ rusty brown
11. Black
12. Other
6.2.3.b Pigmentation on the pseudostem
1. None
2. Brown/rusty brown
3. Black
4. Other

6.2.4 Pseudostem appearance
1. Dull (waxy)
2. Shiny (not waxy)

6.2.5 Predominant underlying colour of the pseudostem
(Remove the outermost sheath and look at the exposed surface. The predominant colour is the one that is more or less even and widespread across the surface. The values 5, 6 and 7 must be selected only if the colour is uniformly distributed and no green is visible.)
1. Watery green
2. Light green
3. Green
4. Cream
5. Pink-purple
6. Red-purple
7. Purple
8. Other

6.2.6 Pigmentation of the underlying pseudostem
(any colour, other than green, that is present in small amounts)
1. Pink-purple
2. Red
3. Purple
4. Other

6.2.7 Sap colour
(Make a cut on the pseudostem and note the main characteristic of the sap.)
1. Watery
2. Milky
3. Red-purple
4. Other

6.2.8 Wax on leaf sheaths
1. Very little or no visible wax
2. Small amount of wax
3. Moderately waxy
4. Very waxy

References

1. IPGRI, INIBAP, CIRAD. 1996. Descriptors for Banana (Musa spp.). IPGRI, Rome, Italy; INIBAP, Montpellier, France; CIRAD, France. 55 pp.

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