Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (Embrapa)

Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária is the Portuguese name of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, better known by its acronym Embrapa. Created in 1973, it is composed of 38 Research Centers, 3 Service Centers and 13 Central Divisions. Its work on bananas is conducted by the National Center for Research on Cassava and Fruit Crops (Embrapa Mandioca e Fruticultura).

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Embrapa cassava and fruits

In addition to banana, Embrapa Mandioca e Fruticultura works on cassava, citrus, mango, papaya, pineapple, passion fruit and acerola. The center carries out studies in the areas of genetic improvement, biotechnology, crop management, pests and diseases, irrigation, plant physiology, post-harvest handling, soil fertility, plant nutrition, soil management and conservation, socioeconomics, statistics, food science and technology. It is also very active in the dissemination of knowledge and technologies for small, intermediate and large farmers, rural extension specialists, agroindustries and the academic community of research.

Banana genebank

Embrapa Mandioca e Fruticultura maintains a field collection of about 400 accessions of wild and cultivated bananas. Half of the accessions are wild species, 100 or so are cultivars and the others are breeding lines. Some 250 of these accessions are duplicated in vitro.

Banana genetic improvement

The banana genetic improvement programme has generated, recommended and distributed an array of cultivars and hybrids that are resistant to Fusarium wilt, black leaf streak or Sigatoka leaf spot, three of the most important banana diseases in Brazil. A Prata-type hybrid (Pacovian Ken) was released in 2001 and a Silk-type hybrid (Tropical) in 2003. It also developed another Prata-type hybrid, BRS Platina.

The research centre also has a programme for breeding ornamental bananas.
Some synthetic hybrids developed by EMBRAPA

'PA 03-22', 'PC 12-05', 'PV 03-44'. These synthetic hybrids showed a good level of resistance to Fusarium wilt race 1 in field evaluation trials in Australia.\[1\]

References

1. Information on the Embrapa banana genebank on the MusaNet website
2. Ornamental bananas made in Brazil in the 29 November 2011 edition of In Pictures

External links

Official website of Embrapa Mandioca e Fruticultura
Information on the Embrapa collection on the MusaNet website

See also on this website

InfoMus@ news on the fourth ISHS-ProMusa symposium, which was hosted by Embrapa
In Pictures on Embrapa's ornamental banana breeding programme
Musapedia pages on research organizations:
Bioversity International
Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement - CIRAD
Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza - CATIE
Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária - Embrapa
Fundación Hondureña de Investigación Agrícola - FHIA
International Institute of Tropical Agriculture - IITA
Taiwan Banana Research Institute - TBRI

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