

# GLOBALG.A.P. develops new TR4 biosecurity add-on for bananas

TR4 is a plant disease of the roots of banana plants. It is a fungus but it cannot be controlled by fungicides or chemicals. This poses a serious threat to the worldwide banana production. The best way to fight the disease is to prevent its spread.

Following the FAOs and GLOBALG.A.P. stakeholders' urge to step up action against this destructive banana disease, GLOBALG.A.P. developed a tool whereby banana producers can curb the spread of the disease and at the same time show evidence of this. GLOBALG.A.P. recently presented the TR4 Biosecurity Add-On for Bananas.

It is an innovation in the GLOBALG.A.P. family of standards, since it is the first commodity-specific Add-On that focuses on a major pathogen. It tackles biosecurity measures to prevent the introduction and spread of *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* - tropical race 4 (TR4), which is also referred to as "Foc 4" or "Panama disease".

This Add-On has been developed through an extensive collaboration with producer organizations from various countries, leading scientific institutions, plant protection agencies and other stakeholders such as certification bodies (CBs).

The TR4 Biosecurity Add-On equips Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) certified producers (for bananas only) with a tool to perform a detailed risk assessment of their banana plantations and provides the basic points in the preparation of a mitigation plan. The requirements build on the Good Agricultural Practices set out in the IFAS standard and the Add-On is therefore only applicable to those producers that have IFA certification for their banana production.

At the same time, CBs assessing this Add-On need to have provisions in place in order to ensure that proper disinfection measures have been performed by their auditors before and after visiting a banana plantation. The TR4 Biosecurity Add-On is a voluntary assessment (not a certificate), which will be visible in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database.

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