



Honduran Foundation
for Agricultural Research

Banana **FHIA-25**

*A high-yielding cooking banana resistant
to Black Sigatoka*



Banana and Plantain Program

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INTRODUCTION

The dwarf hybrid FHIA-25 is a cooking banana, which was selected in 1997. In order to assess its adaptation to different environmental conditions, evaluations are currently taking place in many parts of the world, e.g. Australia, Cuba, Ghana, Haiti, Jamaica, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

Green fruits of FHIA-25 may be eaten boiled or fried (chips).

CHARACTERISTICS



Harvest may be done one hand at a time, over 2 months.

Morphology

The plant height is between 2.5 and 3.0 meters; it has decumbent leaves and a glossy stem. The bunch is cylindrical and hangs vertically. The light green fruits are straight or slightly bent and the flower end is shaped like a bottleneck.

The vigorous, semi-dwarf plants do not require propping if properly spaced.

Phenology

The time from planting to flowering is between 250 and 300 days. The first production cycle requires 120 to 150 days from flowering to

harvest. The second flowering occurs between 400 and 450 days after planting.

Production

The net bunch weight without the stalk is between 38 and 45 kilograms, and the number of fruits per bunch varies from 246 to 274. The weight of one banana is between 100 and 150 grams.



Bunch of banana FHIA-25.

The individual hands of a bunch mature in a sequential manner, so the hands can be harvested one at a time over several months.

Resistance features

The hybrid is highly resistant to the Black Sigatoka fungus. Its resistance to other diseases and to nematodes is being studied, but preliminary results indicate that it shows resistance to the nematode *Pratylenchus coffeae*.

AGRONOMICAL ASPECTS

Agro-ecological requirements

FHIA-25 is tolerant to sub-optimal growing conditions, but it is recommended to select non-flooding, well-drained areas that are easily accessible throughout the year.

Altitude: FHIA-25 grows well at altitudes from sea level to higher than 1000 meters above sea level.

Soils: the hybrid requires loamy soils.

Rain: should be well-distributed and about 2000 mm per year.

Temperature: the optimum mean temperature is 28 °C.

Crop management

Plant densities of 1600 plants per hectare are recommended.

Fertilizer requirements should be based on the results of a soil analysis. Generally, under the prevailing conditions in Sula Valley (Honduras), annual applications of 300 kg of nitrogen and 250 kg of potassium per hectare are recommended.

Deleafing should be carried out every 4 weeks, eliminating the doubled leaves and removing the infected tips of other leaves. Young shoots should be removed every 8 weeks. The removal of "sister shoots" should be done 4 months after planting.

Post-harvest

The individual hands of a bunch should be harvested separately from the plant, because they mature in a sequential manner. In home gardens, one single bunch may supply green fruits for 2 months.

FHIA-25 has a long green life once harvested. The green fruit has yellow pulp with excellent flavor and texture. It is easy to peel and cooks rapidly.