



bluebox
innovations for the **real** world

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Pathogen resistant banana

Technology

Queensland University of Technology (QUT) researchers have identified gene sequences which may be used for generating banana plants resistant to Fusarium wilt, a notorious fungal pathogen that has previously wiped out banana plantations in various parts of the world.

As Fusarium wilt is difficult to control using standard quarantine and soil treatment, genetic modification is a unique tool for protecting susceptible banana varieties against the pathogen. The discovered gene sequences originate from a wild banana cultivar, and target resistance to races 1 and 4 of Fusarium wilt.

Market

Bananas are a very popular fruit, ranking first in terms of volume in international trade. More than 88 million tonnes of bananas are produced worldwide every year, with the total market value of the international banana trade averaging US\$4.5–5 billion per year. In Australia, the banana market produces an average of 250,000 tonnes of bananas annually, at an estimated market value of AU\$300–350 million in 2005.

Cavendish bananas, which comprise 47% of the total banana production and account for a significant portion of the world banana trade, are susceptible to race 4 of Fusarium wilt. Other banana cultivars Lady Finger and Gros Michel are susceptible to races 1 and 4, and as a consequence are less economically important, however this may change if resistant crops can be developed.

This technology may prove valuable for protecting the global banana industry from the spread of the pathogen, as well as providing banana growers with a wider variety of resistant cultivars with favourable taste and flavour.

Business Opportunity

This technology is available for licensing or development opportunities to interested industry partners.

Contact

The technologies team at **bluebox**, the technology transfer and commercialisation company for QUT, consists of experienced professionals with industry-relevant technical backgrounds and a broad range of skills in management, legal, patent and financing areas.

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