Method: Propagation from axillary buds

Select suckers only from fields free of bacterial or fungal wilts and with a minimal presence of nematodes and weevils. Mark plants with big bunches, healthy, abundant suckers, stout trunk and firm rooting.

Medium sized suckers (200 – 500 g) are preferable. Expose the invisible buds at the base of each leaf sheath on the corm by removing the leaf sheath one by one. The primary sprout should be destroyed with a X cut deep into the centre of the sucker.

Suckers are placed into a bed of moistened sawdust within a high humidity chamber.

The sawdust bed should be moistened frequently to keep it humid.

Sprouts of the main shoot should be eliminated when they appear, since they will inhibit the sprouting of the axillary buds.

Carefully remove sprouts reaching a sufficient size. Suckers can then be returned to the moistened sawdust to stimulate additional sprouts.

Once cut, shoots originating from axillary buds are transplanted into bags in a weaning nursery.

The nursery site should be well drained with good air circulation and easy access to water.

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**DO NOTs** in the production of plants from axillary buds

**DO NOT** use poorly prepared suckers. Removing too much or too little leaf will produce only a few sprouts from buds at the base of the leaf sheaths.

**DO NOT** allow the main sprout to grow undisturbed because it will suppress growth of axillary buds.

**DO NOT** maintain excess shade in the nursery.

**DO NOT** maintain plants too crowded in the nursery. More space per plant promotes improved growth.

Propagating quality planting material to improve plant health and crop performance: key practices for dessert banana, plantain and cooking banana