Rapid Multiplication of Banana Plants in the Field

If you have a superior variety of banana, and want to make it widely available, is there a shortcut or do you need to wait for pups to form naturally? Dr. Rowe shared a method that captured the attention of many at the conference.

"This is the most practical way known to increase the numbers of plants. In fields specifically for production of more planting material, the initial individual plants should be planted at a spacing of 2 x 2 meters (6.3 x 6.3 ft) as compared to a spacing of about 3.5 2 x 3.5 meters (8.9 x 11.4 ft) in fields for fruit production."

The sequential procedures are illustrated with photos as follows.

Step 1 shows the approximate size the initial plants should be for beginning the rapid multiplication process.

Step 2. Remove three of the outer sheaves from the trunk all the way to the base of the plant.

Step 3. Remove all leaves, double the trunk to a shape of the number "7," and drive a thin flat stake which is 5 cm (2.5 in) wide all the way through the center of the trunk at the height shown.

Step 4. Sprinkle a handful of fertilizer (urea or a complete fertilizer) around the base of the trunk.

All the suckers (Step 7) should be dug and the corms prepared by cutting the trunks off at about (5.1 x 7.6 cm) (2-3 in) above the corms. Roots should be removed by cutting them off at the surface of the corms. Corms 10.1 cm (4 in) and larger in diameter can be planted directly in the field. Smaller corms can be allowed to grow 3-4 months in plastic bags (with a soil capacity of about 2 liters) before being planted in the field.

For additional

Step 5. Cover the fertilizer and base of the trunk with about 7 cm (3 in) of soil.

Step 6. The completed process for inducing multiple sucker development.

multiplications, replant the largest corm in the spot from which the corms were dug. Then, after the plant from this corm is about the size shown in Step 1, the multiplication process can be repeated.

The method works because the apical dominance of the growing point has been destroyed by the stake driven through the middle of the stem.

Step 7. The abundance of suckers produced about 4 months later