



National Agricultural Research Institute

Copies of the leaflet can be obtained from:

Research Programme Leader
Dry Lowlands Programme - Laloki
PO Box 1828
PORT MORESBY
National Capital District
Papua New Guinea

Telephone: (675) 3281015/3281068
Fax: (675) 3281075
Email: dlplaloki@datec.com.pg

BANANA BIT INFORMATION



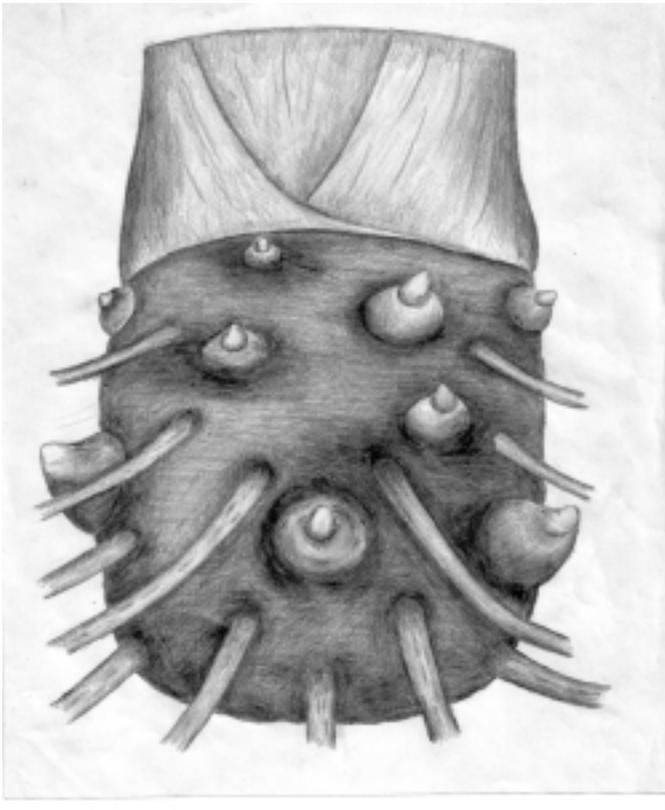
NARI TOKTOK
LAL001E

May 2002

What are Banana Bits?

Banana bits are pieces of corm, or the underground part that has roots and buds or eyes.

Banana Corm



THE INSTITUTE

The National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) was established by an Act of National Parliament of Papua New Guinea in July 1996 as a publicly funded, statutory research organisation, to conduct applied and development oriented research on food crops, alternative food and cash crops, livestock and resource management issues. Besides applied and adaptive research, NARI is responsible for providing authoritative technical, analytical and diagnostic services and up-to-date information to the entire agriculture sector in PNG. The major targets are the smallholder semi-commercial farmers in the country.

The mission of NARI is to contribute, through applied research and technical services, to the development of the agriculture sector and realization of the national goals by identifying, adapting and transferring agricultural technologies and information, so as to:

- Enhance the productivity, efficiency and sustainability of the smallholder agriculture, and
- Improve farmer income, food security and welfare of Papua New Guineans and the Nation.

This toktok was written by Janet Paofa,
NARI Dry Lowlands Programme in May
2002.

Two important considerations

Ensure the soil is moist by watering at least twice a week.

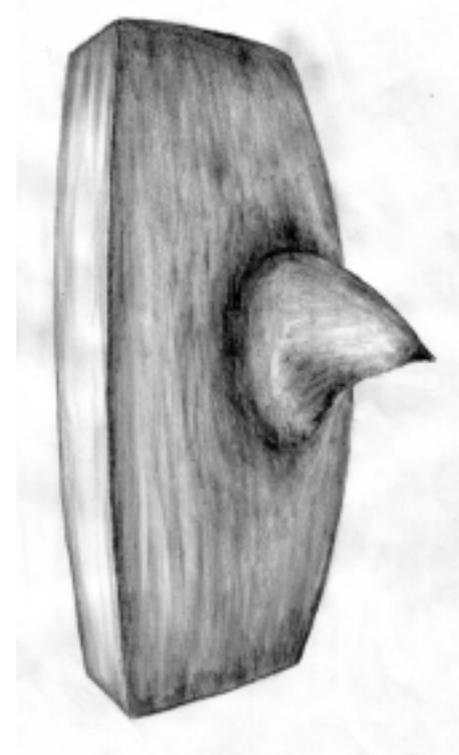
Ensure the soil is free from weeds.

Note:

Banana shoots should emerge within 3 weeks from planting. Bits failing to emerge should be replaced immediately.

One average size corm can produce 6-8 bits each of which will grow into a banana plant. Banana bit technique is the fastest way of multiplying planting materials when big quantities are needed.

Banana Bit



Selection of Banana Corms

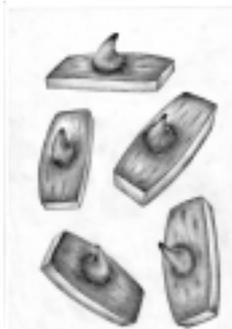
Select a plant close to flowering or one that has recently bunched at 8th months or more after planting. The corm from a harvested mother plant can also be used, however this may not provide sufficient banana bits.

Preparation of bits for Planting Material

To prepare bits, cut and remove the banana stem and uproot the corm from the ground.

Gently clean the corm and remove leaf sheaths to expose emerging buds or eyes.

Cut the corm into bits containing the selected buds or eyes.



Trim the bits into a uniform shape and peel the outer layer of skin a few centimeters away from the bud to remove unwanted buds. Avoid

narrow shaped bits that have buds close to the cut surface or at the bottom. The bud should be at the center of the bit.

Store the bits in a cool place and plant within a week of preparation.

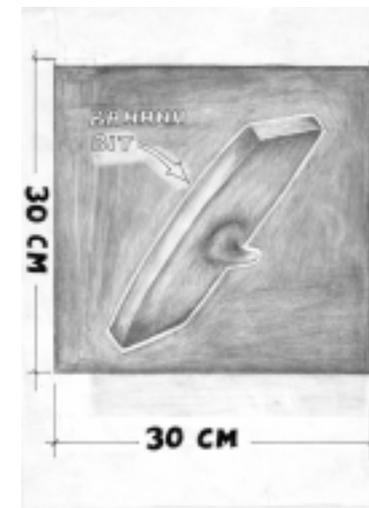
Planting Method

Dig holes one spade length deep and one spade length wide (30 cm x 30 cm).

Apply one medium Besta tin (48 grams) of chicken manure in the hole and thoroughly mix it with soil.

Place banana bit into the hole at an angle (45°), with the cut surface facing upwards and the bud facing the soil.

Planting of Banana Bit in Hole



Cover the bit with soil and apply water