

# Banana

## Soil and Climate

### Soil

Fertility of soil is very important for successful cultivation, as banana is a heavy feeder. Banana, is one of the few fruits, which has a restricted root zone. Hence, depth and drainage are the two most important considerations in selecting the soil for banana. The soil suitable for banana should be 0.5-1 m in depth, rich, well drained, fertile, moisture retentive, containing plenty of organic matter. The range of pH should be 6.5-7.5. Alluvial and volcanic soils are the best for banana cultivation. Banana is grown in India on a variety of soils such as the heavy clay soil of the Cauveri delta, alluvial soils of the Gangetic delta, black loam in Maharashtra, coastal sandy loams and the red lateritic soil of the hilly tracts of Kerala. These areas are famous for growing good crop of banana.

### Climate

Banana is essentially tropical plant requiring a warm and humid climate. However, it can be grown from sea level to all altitudes of 1200 metres. It can be cultivated in a temperature range of 10°C and 40°C with high humidity but growth is retarded at temperatures of 20°C and less and more than 35°C. Yields are higher when temperatures are above 24°C for a considerable period. In cooler climate, the crop requires longer time to mature. Plants exposed to low temperature and humidity during active growth stage show reduced growth and yields. Hot winds blowing in high speed during the summer months shred and desiccate the leaves. It requires on an average, 1700 mm rainfall distributed throughout the year for its satisfactory growth. Stagnation of water is injurious and may cause diseases like Panama wilt.