

## Crop Improvement

### 1. Dr. K. S. Ravi, Innova Agri Bio Park Pvt. Ltd, Malur, Kolar, Karnataka

13<sup>th</sup> May 2022, ICAR - NRCB has transferred New Generation Tissue Culture System to Innova Agri Bio Park Limited. In continuation of the technology transfer, a five days hands-on training on the technology has been given to the company authorities. This technology will facilitate the cost-efficient supply of banana planting material to the farming communities. Seed or planting material is the most important and vital input for agricultural production and productivity. Globally, India is the largest producer of banana. The role of tissue cultured planting material contributed immensely to achieve the production about 30 million tons per annum from an area of 0.8 million ha. There are more than 20 varieties are commercially cultivated, among them Grand Naine alone occupies 57% of total area. Approximately 20% of the planting material requirement being fulfilled by tissue culture technique. This technology uses banana male floral buds, which facilitate simple and efficient methods for establishment of aseptic cultures. The banana tissue culture industries mainly depend on shoot tip culture technique and spend almost a year for meristem multiplication and eventual rooting and hardening. Now the process is considered as expensive and looking for alternative techniques. This technology yields planting materials in 90 to 120 days with the use of somatic embryos and 150 to 180 days with the use of embryogenic cells which were cultivar dependent. Now the company has started to produce Grand Naine and Red Banana varieties using the ICAR - NRCB technology.



## 2. M/s. Shankar Bio-tech, Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu

‘Kaveri Kalki’ an exotic introduction belonging to Karpuravalli (*Pisang Awak*) type obtained from the Alliance Bioversity International and CIAT. The unique variety of ICAR – NRCB is not prone to lodging. The license for mass multiplication of the variety has been transferred to M/s. Shankar Bio-tech, Krishnagiri for faster adoption by the farmers. The plant is dwarf statured with 2-2.4 meters height compared to Karpuravalli has 4 meters. Plant stature is robust and sturdy with short leaves and suitable for high density planting. It needs no propping, so the cultivation cost is reduced by 10 to 15 %. Average bunch with 13- 15 hands and 16-18 fruits per hand having a potential to yield up to 25 kg. It exhibits the shortest duration of 12 months compared with 15 months for Karpuravalli, hence suitable for annual cropping system. This variety is suitable for cultivation in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, Assam, Karnataka, Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands. The company so far produced 5 lakhs plants and supplied to more than 300 farmers.

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