

# New outbreaks of Black Sigatoka disease of banana

New outbreaks of Black Sigatoka have been identified in the Caribbean and in the Indian Ocean.

- **CARIBBEAN ARC.** Since the last mission by specialists in June 1999 to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, contamination has spread and was amplified by a very marked rainy season at the end of 1999. As forecast in *FruiTrop* (Research and Methods, September 1999, page I), the disease would appear to have crossed the northern frontier into Haiti. Its presence and extent are to be confirmed by analyses. The next target country is therefore Puerto Rico.

- **INDIAN OCEAN.** The disease spread from East Africa and reached the Comoros archipelago and Mayotte in 1993 (confirmed in the latter island in 1995). The disease has since spread to all the plantations on these islands, where the local varieties are very susceptible. CIRAD-FLHOR is backing a plan for the introduction of new, resistant varieties (natural and hybrid). The presence of the disease is suspected in turn in Madagascar. Samples are currently being analysed by CIRAD-FLHOR for confirmation ●

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## Research and Methods

### Citrus descriptors

The INRA-CIRAD team at San Giuliano agricultural research station is the co-ordinator of the new edition of Descriptors for Citrus published by IPGRI. This is a revised version of the 1988 edition designed to include members of the Rutaceae family.

Some 13 genera are covered, the most important being Citrus (16 species including 10 cultivated

species according to Swingle's classification), Fortunella, Poncirus and their hybrids.

The list includes the changes made following work by the INRA-CIRAD research station team in Corsica (France)<sup>1</sup> and by persons participating the EGID-Citrus network<sup>2</sup> co-ordinated by Roland Cottin. It also includes the diversity of Asian crops in the light of the changes made by UTFANET<sup>3</sup>. The guiding principles of UPOV<sup>4</sup> for citrus have been examined, and a standardised approach used whenever possible. A draft version prepared in the IPGRI format for lists of descriptors was then sent to a number of internationally recognised experts for their observations and modifications.

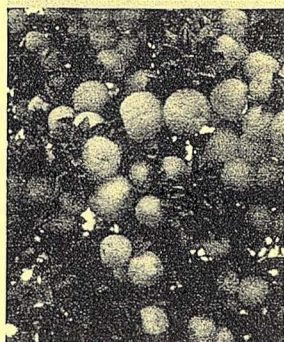
Although the coding system suggested should not be considered as being final, the format is an important tool for a standardised characterisation system and IPGRI is encouraging its use on a world-wide basis. The document forms a universally used 'language' for data concerning plant genetic resources.

Adoption of the system for the encoding of data—or at least the use of methods making it possible to adapt other systems to the IPGRI format—will provide a rapid, reliable and efficient facility for the storage, finding and disseminating of information and will contribute to the use of germplasm.

The English edition on paper is available free of charge from IPGRI (Via delle Sette Chiese, 142, 00145 Roma, Italy). A pdf format edition should shortly be available on-line from [www.cgiar.org/ipgri/doc/download.htm](http://www.cgiar.org/ipgri/doc/download.htm). The French and Spanish editions are currently being finalised ●

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Descripteurs des agrumes  
**IPGRI Citrus spp.**



#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Station de Recherches Agronomiques, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique - Centre de coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement.

<sup>2</sup> Evaluer, Gérer, Informatiser, Diffuser. [www.corse.inra.fr/sra/ecn.htm](http://www.corse.inra.fr/sra/ecn.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Underutilized Fruits in Asia Network.

<sup>4</sup> International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of plants.