

India launches banana gene bank to preserve rare varieties



The National Research Centre for Bananas in Tiruchy has launched a Banana Field Gene Bank project to support the conservation of genetic resources and prevent the loss of banana varieties.

Farmers cultivating rare banana varieties can register with the centre, where scientists will preserve and develop plant material for multiplication. Dr Trilochan Mohapatra said, "This is the first field gene bank for banana in the country."

He said declining interest in farming is affecting genetic diversity, and noted that the Government of India is supporting field gene banks for crops such as coconut, banana, and paddy. "Conserved plant varieties can be multiplied and utilized on a large scale," he said.

The project includes incentives for farmers maintaining unique varieties. According to Mohapatra, farmers will be awarded and recognised for conserving plant genetic resources. Cash prizes include Rs 10 lakh (US\$12,000) for farmer communities and Rs 1.5 lakh (US\$1,800) for individual farmers. Participants may also receive up to Rs 15 lakh (US\$18,000) over three years for conservation efforts.

The initiative aims to support conservation, multiplication, and use of banana genetic material within production systems.

Source: [The New Indian Express](#)

Publication date: Tue 28 Apr 2026