

**Title** Plantain cultivation in Nigeria: a review of its production, marketing and research in the last two decades

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### **Abstract**

Nigeria is one of the largest plantain producing countries in the world. Despite its prominence, the country does not feature among banana/plantain exporting nations. A study was conducted to review its production systems. Findings revealed that the country's output has doubled in the last 20 years. Production, which is concentrated in the southern part of the country, still remains largely in the hands of small-scale farmers who over the years have ingeniously integrated it into various cropping systems. Production is male dominated while women essentially handle marketing. The inadequate knowledge of improved cultural practices of the crop on part of the farmers, inefficient extension service systems and skewedness of specialization in area of research are some reasons why yield potential per land area of plantain is still low in the country. The contribution of plantain production to the income of rural households in major producing areas in Nigeria has increased tremendously in the last few years. Unlike cassava and some other starchy staples whose demand tends to fall with rising incomes, demand for plantain increases with increase in income. With the potentials for industrial processing of plantain that has recently being taken up, and the increased interest in production by small and large-scale farms in the country, it is believed that the country will continue to be one of the world's highest producers of plantain, however, provision of social amenities, disease/infestations and seasonal shortages need special attention on the part of the government and scientists, respectively.