

**Title** Problems on harvesting and post-harvesting of banana  
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### **Abstract**

Banana and plantain constitute the fourth important staple crop, with about 90% of worldwide production consumed locally, leaving just 10% for export. Banana growing is generally labor intensive because plants require intensive, individual care in order to obtain the required fruit quality. For the banana growing sector to re-acquire and maintain a good level of competitiveness on the markets, a rationalization of the entire chain of production is needed, which should be particularly focused on harvesting and post-harvesting operations. This would be helpful to maintain and raise qualitative standards of the product while lowering production costs. Bananas are harvested at various stages of maturity, depending upon the purpose for which it is cultivated and distance to the market. Banana bunches generally are harvested using a curved knife when the fruits are fully developed (75% mature). The labor productivity could increase by use of a single-man positioning platform (hydropicker electrically driven) where possible. Banana bunches are hung on tramways and pulled out of plantation by tractors or people. Hands are cut into units of 4-10 fingers, graded for both length and width and carefully placed in poly-lined boxes. Fruit are usually shipped by boat when green, and ripened by exposure to ethylene gas at their destination, in sealed "banana ripening rooms". Mechanical damage is one the major causes leading to post-harvest deterioration of banana and plantain. It can occur at any time from the point of harvest to the point of consumption. Mechanical damage can affect the product's appearance and increase potential for disease infection. It can also result in lower market quality and price. Assessment of fruit susceptibility to mechanical damage is an important post-harvest selection criterion to provide information on the handling and storage potential of the fruit, and in the design of packaging material for the product.