Fighting banana bacterial wilt in Uganda

Bananas are an important staple food in East Africa but is affected by banana bacterial wilt disease which can cause up to 100% loss.

The disease causes the plants to wilt and die, and spreads very fast. It attacks most of the varieties of bananas. Not only farmers have been affected by the disease but also traders and consumers. When consumers buy the affected bunches of bananas, they find them spoilt inside on peeling. The consumers sometimes take the bananas back to the traders and the traders have to give the consumers other bananas in compensation for the spoilt ones hence causing losses to the traders.

Disease control

Methods used for control of the disease include high vigilance, removal of infected plants, removal of the male bud and disinfecting the garden tools used.

The most pronouncing solution is development of resistant varieties using modern crop biotechnologies. These have been developed in Uganda but lack of a required policy will make farmers wait to have these crops on their farms.