

Banana plague poses global threat

A rapidly spreading soil fungus is devastating banana plantations across Asia and infecting farms in Africa, the Middle East and Australia, prompting the UN to request \$50m to fight the epidemic that threatens a \$36bn industry


 Countries under severe attack by **Tropical Race 4**





PANAMA DISEASE

Fusarium fungus

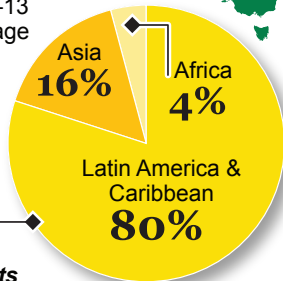
lives in soil and attacks roots before spreading through entire plant. Spores contaminate soil for decades

 Spreads through soil movement, typically caused by workers, machinery, animals or flooding

 **Tropical Race 1:** First strain nearly wiped out **Gros Michel** banana in 1950s – **Cavendish** variety found to be resistant to it

 **Tropical Race 4:** New strain, first detected in Taiwan in 1990, kills Cavendish – only type grown for international market

GLOBAL EXPORTS 2011-13 average



Efforts underway to halt TR4 before it reaches Latin America, which produces 25% of all bananas grown worldwide, and 80% of global exports