

More productive and efficient organic banana as small growers become more digital

Technologies to reduce losses due to red rust and increase productivity by improving soil health are being made available to banana families through the Ma\$ Banano application that facilitates data recording and analysis



Observations and data taken routinely to guide continuous improvement and facilitate benchmarking

Initiative

Research teams in the Dominican Republic, Peru, and Ecuador have designed a monitoring routine to register the effectiveness of improved soil health and red spot management practices. The routine measurement of Indicators monthly, every three months, and yearly enable each grower to identify their options on the

path of continuous improvement. Based on the performance parameters of their growers, the associations can leverage benchmarking, a strategy that encourages improvement through comparisons among growers, especially those with above-average indicator values

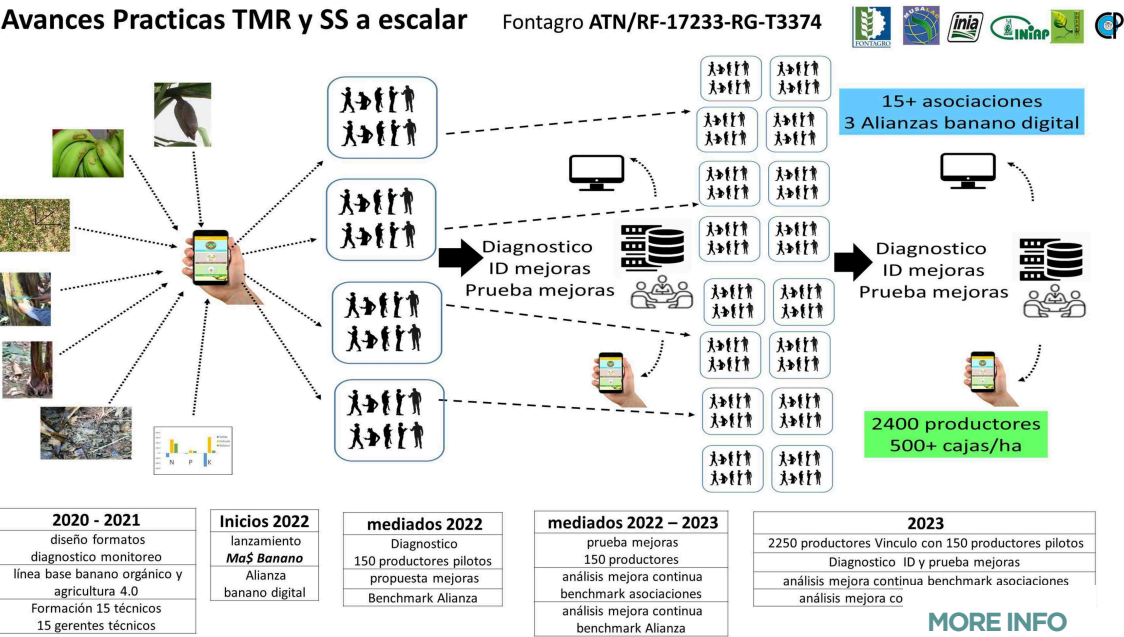
Smartphone App Ma\$ Banano to guide the more timely implementation of bunch bagging and banana residue and fertilizer management aimed at reducing losses to red rust thrips and improving both soil health and banana productivity

Tech solution

To scale these innovations to reduce red rust losses and improve soil health, we have converted the routine of collecting key data and monitoring the effectiveness of practices into a mobile phone app for the capture and transmission of data weekly to a database organized by grower associations. Real-time reports for use by growers, their associations and sector platforms will facilitate discussions on the production and management effectiveness both on the farm and in post-harvest and in the

association. In the first stage, 50 producers in each country pilot continuous improvement guided by the app. A diagnosis of bunch management and soil health and productive parameters in each grower forms the basis for the formulation of an improvement plan. Each association formulates a plan to extend the experiences of pilot growers to all the growers in the association in successive rounds of diagnosis, monitoring, continuous improvement, and benchmarking

Facilitating the scaling of ecological technologies among family producers with digital tools



Impacts and Results

After 36 months of intermittent field activities and 6 months from the project end date, 45 technicians from 13 grower associations have trained in methods for the diagnosis, follow-up, and monitoring of promising practices for managing red rust thrips and soil health. Seven training videos are available online under “YouTube Fontagro Banano Escalamiento” and also instructional videos on each module in the app. One hundred growers in Dominican Republic and Peru have completed a diagnostic baseline based on 37

indicators of red rust thrips and soil health. In the Dominican Republic the growers have a plan for continuous improvement ready to be implemented. The app available online in Google Play is now in an improved version and also the database and system of summaries and reports. Stakeholders in each country have been identified and convened to form a digital banana alliance to promote and oversee the maintenance, operation and growth of Ma\$ Banano and to analyze the growing database

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