


The Dominican Republic has lost about 40% of its banana crop in the north west area due to Black Sigatoka fungus, website *Diariolibre.com.do* reported.

The worst damage was reported in the towns of Cerro Gordo, Hatillo Palma, Villa Vásquez, Palo Verde and other towns of Monte Cristi province. 

The disease has destroyed most of the plantations in La Cruz de Manzanillo project, which is the largest producer in the area.

Banana producers export about 6,000 cases monthly to the European market, but this could be reduced by almost half due to damage caused by the fungus, which accounted for losses of over US\$ 2 million.

The Dominican Association of Banana Producers (Adobanano), growers Humberto Portela and Gabriel García have highlighted the extent of the problem.

The spread of the fungus is bad news for a sector which last year was affected by droughts.

Portela blamed climate change for the spread of Black Sigatoka which causes fruit damage and leaf burning.

García said producers were treating plants to eliminate the fungus but that it had become increasingly resistant.

The regional directorate of agriculture has pledged US\$1.64 million to control the disease.

It has already shipped 5,500 liters of chemicals and 240 tanks of 55 gallons of mineral oil to treat plantations in north west, Azua province and other parts of the country.

Related stories: [Dominican Republic losing US\\$1.2m per week from banana disease](#)

Photo: Agfax.net

www.freshfruitportal.com