

Promoting the conservation and sustainable use of breadfruit in the tropics. (Oral Presentation)

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Introduction

The National Tropical Botanical Garden in Hawaii manages the world's largest conservation collection of breadfruit, with more than 120 cultivars from 18 Pacific Island groups, Indonesia, the Philippines, and the Seychelles. This breadfruit genebank represents a global resource in the effort to develop more sustainable agriculture, increase crop diversity, and enhance food security in tropical regions. The Breadfruit Institute was established in 2002 to conserve breadfruit diversity and traditional knowledge and to promote its use for nutrition, income, and environmental protection.

Objectives

Why Breadfruit? The trees require little attention, do well under a wide range of ecological conditions, begin bearing fruit in three to five years and are productive for many decades. This tree of bread? has the potential to play a significant role in alleviating hunger in the tropics by providing nutritious food and trees for agroforestry and homegardens.

Methods

A research program is underway to develop effective and simple methods to propagate breadfruit plants using tissue culture. This international program involves the Breadfruit Institute, the University of Guelph, the University of British Columbia, and the Regional Germplasm Centre in Fiji. The goal is to conserve breadfruit germplasm in tissue culture and mass-produce and distribute plants of selected varieties. The Institute is also working to develop partnerships with international, national, regional, and local organizations to establish a network to distribute breadfruit varieties and provide technical support and information about growing and using breadfruit.

Results

None

Conclusion

This paper will provide an overview of the work of the Breadfruit Institute to develop and implement practical strategies and programs for sustainable conservation and use of breadfruit.

Keywords: *Artocarpus altilis*

Selected References

None

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