

**B-64 : MATURITY DETERMINATIONS OF "EMBUL" BANANAS**

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At present 'embul' variety of banana is harvested when fruits lose their angularity. Due to the absence of maturity indices for this and other Sri Lankan banana varieties, over-mature and immature fruits are harvested, causing postharvest problems leading to heavy losses. This study was initiated to record fruit development from flowering until maturity for harvest.

Bananas were harvested weekly starting from the first week of flower opening. Fruits were tested for physico-chemical parameters. Finger weight, diameter, and firmness were recorded together with pH, total soluble solids and titratable acidity of the flesh over a period of 13 weeks. While no difference in physico - chemical parameters were observed between the 12th and 13th week, changes were minimal from the 11th week.

The study indicated that 'embul' variety banana is physiologically mature at the 9th week. Thus bananas for shipment to overseas markets may be harvested without loss of quality as early as 10 and 11 weeks after flower opening.