

# Musa rosa Banana<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman, Ryan W. Klein, and Gail Hansen<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

Musa rosa is a tall, herbaceous perennial that reaches a height of about 4 feet. This ornamental, stoloniferous plant has large, evergreen leaves that can grow to a length of about 3 feet, much smaller than the banana common in many Florida gardens. These leaves are pale green with dark green variegation, and they impart a coarse texture. The hanging orange and yellow flowers of this plant are borne terminally under protective bracts. They are covered by pinkish-red bracts and appear in the summer. Fruits hang in clusters and are quite edible.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Musa rosa*: Banana Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Flower - *Musa rosa*: Banana Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

### **General Information**

Scientific name: Musa rosa

Pronunciation: MEW-suh ROE-zuh

Common name(s): banana

Family: Musaceae

Plant type: shrub

**USDA hardiness zones:** 9B through 11 (Figure 3)

Planting month for zone 9: year round

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Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: aggressive, spreading plant

Uses: specimen; accent

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

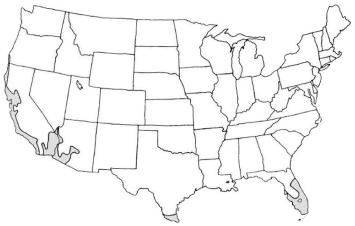


Figure 3. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## **Description**

**Height:** 2 to 4 feet

Spread: 4 to 6 feet

Plant habit: palm

Plant density: open

Growth rate: fast

Texture: coarse

### **Foliage**

Leaf arrangement: spiral

**Leaf type:** simple

Leaf margin: entire

**Leaf shape:** oblong

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: more than 36 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

#### **Flower**

Flower color: orange; yellow

Flower characteristic: summer flowering

### Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated

Fruit length: 6 to 12 inches

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: red; yellow

Fruit characteristic: suited for human consumption;

persists on the plant

#### **Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; showy

Current year stem/twig color: not applicable

Current year stem/twig thickness: not applicable

#### **Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** extended flooding; acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay

Soil salt tolerances: poor

**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

#### Other

**Roots:** sprouts from roots or lower trunk

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by

pests

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## **Use and Management**

*Musa rosa* imparts a tropical effect in any garden or landscape. It makes a charming specimen plant that can be planted among shrubs or by itself as a specimen in a small, protected garden. They will be frozen to the ground in central Florida during the winter months. Since the growing point remains at or slightly below the ground, plants grow back if winter temperatures remain above 20 degrees.

This plant needs to be installed in an area of the landscape that receives full sun to partial shade. It prefers moist, fertile soils, but adapts to about anything. It grows well in wet sites.

*Musa rosa* is commonly propagated by division of the matted clumps.

#### **Pests and Diseases**

Diseases of *Musa rosa* include cercospora leaf spot, Panama disease, scales, and nematodes.

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