New Zealanders are one of the greatest consumers of bananas per capita in the world. However, the cooler climate means that over €124 million worth of bananas is imported annually to meet the demand.

Whilst Kiwi-produced bananas will be more expensive than the imported competition, they’re tastier and could be grown spray and chemical-free because the tropical parasites that thrive on bananas aren't present in New Zealand. Amongst the varieties the team is testing, there is one that resembles the taste of an apple and another one like an apricot.

The trials were financially supported by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, with the goal also being to develop a new commercial opportunity for indigenous farmers.

AgResearch scientist Jane Mullaney said the test crops would be ready for harvest by mid-next year.

Explore more: Food & Drink Innovations | Sustainability Innovations

11th June 2020
Takeaway:

According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Indigenous Peoples play a unique role in the conservation of biodiversity and in the mitigation of climate change, thanks to their traditional knowledge and understanding of ecosystem management. In fact, Indigenous Peoples preserve 80 per cent of the world’s biodiversity within their lands, according to the World Bank.