

The Cavendish banana could be wiped out

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The Cavendish, the version of the banana that tops most U.S. cereal bowls, is being wiped out by fungus.

Banana plantations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia and Taiwan have been destroyed by the fungus, which is spreading through much of Southeast Asia, reports Popular Science.

Experts say the fungus could wipe out Cavendish bananas worldwide.

To save the banana, scientists are trying to genetically alter the Cavendish to make it able to resist the fungus. They are also developing another variety that they hope most consumers would find an acceptable substitute.

In any event, this has happened before -- up until the 1960s, Americans ate Gros Michel bananas, a banana that was larger and considered tastier than the Cavendish. That variety got killed by a fungus.

Bananas are the most popular U.S. fruit -- the average American consumes 26.2 pounds of bananas a year, reported the New York Times Sunday.

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