

**BANANA FARMING – A PROFITABLE ENTERPRISE IN VALIKAMAM EAST
DS DIVISION, JAFFNA**

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Banana, an ancient fruit, has evolved into one of the world's most widely cultivated, traded, and consumed fruits. Its popularity is particularly noteworthy in Sri Lanka, where it is the most widely grown and consumed fruit. Jaffna emerged as a key district for banana farming, prompting an investigation into the economic dynamics of banana production in the Valikamam East Divisional Secretary (DS) division. Neervely and Urumpirai AI ranges were selected for this investigation because of their extensive cultivation and high density of banana producers. The primary goal was to study the profitability of banana farming in the Valikamam East DS division. It also examines the socioeconomic traits and cultivation challenges of banana production in the study area. The simple random sampling method was used to select 100 banana farmers for the primary data collection. In addition, secondary data were used from various sources. Data were analyzed using SPSS software with descriptive statistics and frequencies. The findings revealed all farmers utilized their own land, with an average farmer age of 55.8 years and an average family size of 4.5 members. Notably, 88% of banana farmers were men, and approximately half engaged in banana farming as their primary occupation. Despite major challenges like climate hazards and high labour costs, the annual average cost of production, return, and net profit stood at Rs 281,390, Rs 671,066, and Rs 389,676 per acre, respectively. It indicated the profitability of banana production in the study area with a Benefit-Cost ratio of 2.38. Overall, this research provides valuable insights for banana farmers, policymakers, and researchers, paving the way for enhanced cultivation practices and informed decision-making.

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