PLANT EPIDEMICS: COLLAPSE AND REVIVAL OF CRITICAL PLANT SPECIES

Look through the media below about plant diseases with significant impacts on three important plant species: banana, potato, and chestnut.

What made each species important? How did societies rely on these species before the effects of their respective epidemics?

What factors besides the disease contributed to the collapse of each species? How did it change communities that relied on the plant?

What are the ways being used to restore the species? What lessons do these examples offer for our relationship to the plant world?

CAVENDISH BANANA

Discover Magazine, *The Banana as We Know It is Dying… Again*

https://www.discovermagazine.com/planet-earth/the-banana-as-we-know-it-is-dyingagain

Time Magazine, *What We Can Learn from the Near Death of the Banana*

https://time.com/5730790/banana-panama-disease/

ACIAR Australia, *The science of stopping Panama Disease* (6:03 video)

https://youtu.be/GAZGa1v7u8A

LUMPER POTATO

Smithsonian Magazine, *How the Potato Changed the World*

https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/how-the-potato-changed-the-world-108470605/

Understanding Evolution (University of California, Berkeley),

Monoculture and the Irish Potato Famine: cases of missing genetic variation

https://evolution.berkeley.edu/evolibrary/article/0_0_0/agriculture_02

Baltimore Sun, *Irish famine returns to table talk*

https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-1997-08-30-1997242008-story.html

AMERICAN CHESTNUT

The American Chestnut Foundation, *History of the American Chestnut*

https://www.acf.org/the-american-chestnut/history-american-chestnut/

Science Magazine, *To save iconic American chestnut, researchers plan introduction of genetically engineered tree into the wild*

https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2018/08/save-iconic-american-chestnut-researchers-plan-introduction-genetically-engineered-tree#

CBS This Morning,

Once an icon, the functionally extinct American chestnut tree could be restored (4:44 video)

https://youtu.be/-4yHysNph5U