



By Maura Maxwell

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Haiti banana recovery could take a decade

The devastation caused by Hurricane Matthew has set the country's fledgling export industry back by years



The authorities in Haiti are warning that it could be more than a decade before the country recovers economically from Hurricane Matthew which struck the southwestern peninsula earlier this month killing hundreds.

According to Mercy Corps, more than 80 per cent of the crops were destroyed by the strong winds and flooding in the main banana growing area Arcacheie, while in Grand-Anse the destruction was almost 100 per cent.

"We're very worried about the country's future in terms of food security," Hervil Cherubin of Heifer International, a non-profit that works with more than 6,500 farming families in the south, told the New York Times. "Most of the crops are gone. Many of the farm fields are like landfills. They're full of trash, seawater, gravel and other debris."

The hurricane adds to a long history of problems for Haiti's banana industry. Last year, Agritrans, a project set up by presidential candidate Jovenel Moise with the backing of the

government to develop organic banana production in Trou-du-Nord, carried out the country's first banana exports in 60 years under a contract said to be worth €93m a year. But in May of this year, the government announced that Agritrans had filed for bankruptcy.