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## Compagnie Fruitière expands organic



The French banana importer has committed to boosting the area of its organic plantations and reducing its use of plant protection products

**F**rench banana importer Compagnie Fruitière has laid out its roadmap for sustainable banana production in Africa, prepared alongside environmental non-profit WWF France.

The two groups agreed a partnership last year with the aim of promoting sustainable agriculture, including reducing the use of synthetic fertilisers and plant protection products in its plantations.

The roadmap includes a commitment from Compagnie Fruitière to expand organic farming from 5 per cent of its surface area to 20 per cent by 2025, including through the acquisition of new organic plantations, possible in Latin America.

It also commits the company

to experimenting with innovative and sustainable production methods to develop new ecological agricultural practices on its conventional plots.

By 2025, half of Compagnie Fruitière's banana plantations in Ghana will use zero synthetic plant protection products, while the other half will be farmed organically, the company revealed.

Following the French government's Ecophyto 2 Plan, aiming to lower the use of plant protection products by 50 per cent by 2025, the company is implementing a project called "4x sans" in Ghana.

The aim of the project is to gradually eliminate fungicides, nematicides, herbicides and insecticides over a surface area of 1,000ha, representing an annual production of 1,000ha.

The conversion plan will, in time, enable half of the banana plantations to be certified as organic and half as free of synthetic plant protection products.

In partnership with leading research institutes, including CIRAD, CNRS and IRSTEA, Compagnie Fruitière is currently working on innovative best practices in Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon, as well as in Ghana.

Bananas are the second most popular fruit in France, with annual consumption of 8kg per inhabitant and imports of 840,000 tonnes a year, making France the fifth largest importer of the fruit in Europe.