

Text for the audio; Station 15

You may have noticed that the bananas in front of you are smaller than the regular bananas that you eat and that they over all look a little different? Well that's because these so called Umq Bir bananas, that were named after the region they were discovered in, were discovered in a mountain oasis in the desert land Oman by our plant scientist Dr. Andreas Buerkert and his colleague Dr. Sulaiman Al Khanjari in 2003. A fun story of the discovery: Dr. Andreas Buerkert was dropped off in the middle of the desert by a helicopter and given three hours to search these bananas. And indeed, with binoculars he discovered some banana plants in an inaccessible crevice. A local farmer confirmed to him that bananas had once been cultivated up there and agreed to bring them in exchange for his watch. After a few minutes, he held the banana in his hand, which was then carefully packed for its journey to Kassel. Isn't that awesome? But that's not the only special thing about this fruit: It isn't just healthier and has a sweeter taste but it also shows pest resistance, whether or not insecticides are used. For instance, if a beetle bores a perennial, the plant produces phenylphenalenone, a substance, and poisons the harmful insect. The banana is basically it selves protector. Don't worry, this substance doesn't harm humans. In conclusion we can say that we have a interesting fruit that provides us with a lot more of itself than regular bananas because of it's great immune system, thanks to our plant scientist Dr. Andreas Buerkert.