

BANANA



For many years I have jokingly said that we grow virtually every edible plant there is, with the exception of bananas. That changed in 2020...

- The variety I have chosen is *Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelii', otherwise known as the Red Abyssinian Banana. Although it is a tender plant, it is becoming increasingly popular as a bedding plant in this country, and makes a fantastic feature at the back of a flowerbed, or as a specimen plant, but won't produce fruit in the UK.
- It likes a warm sunny position, sheltered from the wind. It will need a rich soil, with regular watering and feeding with a nitrogen rich fertilizer. The plants are fast growing, and can reach a height of 2m in the first year, potentially up to 4m in excellent growing conditions after 10years.
- It can be grown in a large pot, or planted in the ground. Growing it in a pot will limit the size it can reach, but will make it easier to care for during the colder months.
- They can be over-wintered by cutting them back to 2 or 3 leaves, wrapping them in thick fleece, and mulching the roots heavily with well-rotted manure or compost. Where the temperature drops below 7c it is best to overwinter the plant in a frost-free greenhouse, and move it back outside once all risk of frost has passed.