Objective: Since 2001 *Xanthomonas* wilt (BXW) has drastically reduced banana productivity in over 8000 km^2 of farmland in Nord Kivu Province of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Banana constitutes the major source of income and staple diet for 700 000 residents of the affected area and an additional approximately 5 million people who depend on banana in the neighbouring regions. This paper focuses on some of the factors that have contributed to disease spread and presents strategies that could contribute to effective management. Methodology and results: The paper is based on a review of existing published literature, technical reports and some outcomes of disease surveys carried out in the eastern DRC. The dominant banana cultivar grown is Pisang Awak which is highly susceptible to BXW. The affected region is in the high altitude agroecological zone and disease appears to be transmitted through a combination of mechanisms including insect vectors and natural factors, e.g. water splash. Mechanical tools have less importance in disease spread, largely due to low effort made by farmers to management of banana plantations. In threatened areas, disease management has focused on training farmers to recognize disease and effective preventive measures. In affected areas, efforts have been mostly directed to reducing inoculum and halting disease spread by destroying infected mats. Conclusion and applications of findings: Poor and inconsistent implementation of management measures, either due to lack of knowledge, persisting civil instability or lack of resources among other factors continue to limit success in managing the disease. Recent surveys show that the disease is spreading westwards, with increased risk of further spread through the Congo basin to key *Musa*-producing regions in central and west Africa. Some of the factors that could slow down the westward spread of BXW include sparse human populations in the forest zone, warmer and more humid agroecological conditions presented by the forest, and higher plantain densities in western DRC.