

Bananas



School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme



Your delivery

- Each pack contains: 10 bananas
- Number of pieces per pupil: 1
- **Storage:** Somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight and chemicals, and ideally off the ground
- **Preparation:** None, although some of the younger children may need help with peeling

What to expect

Bananas should be predominately yellow in colour with light greening around the neck and tips. Grey, dull coloured fruit is indicative of chill damage – the fruit inside will only remain unaffected by the chill for a day or two. Brown (sugar) spots appear as the fruit ripens. These are safe and acceptable. The riper the bananas is, the sweeter it is.

The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme provides schools with Cavendish bananas.

Place of origin

Bananas originated from Malaysian jungle area of south east Asia. They are now grown all over the tropical and subtropical continents of the world in countries such as Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, Cameroon and Caribbean Islands.

Nutritional information

- ✓ Good source of vitamins C and B6
- ✓ Good source of potassium, which has been used to lower blood pressure and in the treatment of nervous disorders.
- ✓ Bananas are the most nutritionally complex fruit. With an average two to three times the level of carbohydrate of other fruit but no fat, they are the ideal high energy snack.
- ✓ All fruit and vegetables are low in sodium, calories and fat and are good source of dietary fibre.



Tips for storing, handling and eating bananas at home

- Bananas continue to ripen after harvest.
- They should be stored in a fruit bowl, at a cool room temperature. If stored in a warm room they will quickly become overripe. Bananas should not be stored in a refrigerator as the skin will turn black and the fruit will decay inside.
- As well as making a perfect snack, bananas can be added raw to fruit salads (brush with orange juice to prevent browning), or baked, grilled, fried or barbecued. They can also be used in cakes, puddings, smoothies and sandwiches. Green bananas and plantain can be used in savoury dishes like curries with meat or fish.

Simple recipe

Mix a pinch of cinnamon, a pinch of nutmeg, a medium-sized glass of apple juice and four tablespoons of dried mixed fruit together. Heat to boiling. Reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered for 15 minutes until the fruit is tender. Add a teaspoon of butter. Core four cooking apples and fill the centres with the fruit mixture. Pour over a little more juice. Bake for about 45 minutes at 190°C/Gas Mark 5.

How bananas are grown

- Apple trees are not usually grown from seed; the shoots of a particular variety are grafted onto a different root stock.
- An apple tree will start to bear fruit when it is about three years old.
- In the spring, the trees are covered with white blossom that is pollinated by insects.
- The flowers produce fruit, which continues to grow through the summer and matures in autumn, when it is ready to be picked.
- Apples are picked by hand because mechanical harvesters can damage the fruit and the trees.
- Apples are picked when they are ripe.
- Apple trees rest during winter months, when they are pruned and prepared for the next growing period. It is difficult to grow apples in tropical countries because they do not have a winter season when the trees can rest

Interesting fact

- Bananas are the worlds most widely consumed fruit – other than grapes, which are only higher because of their role in wine making
- During the war, bananas could not be imported into the UK and people in Britain did not see a banana for 8 years.
- The Manchester United football squad say they eat a banana before every game

For more information

www.nhs.uk/5aday, www.nhs.uk/change4life, www.food.gov.uk, www.nhs.uk/healthyeating and www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk