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Your child discovered...



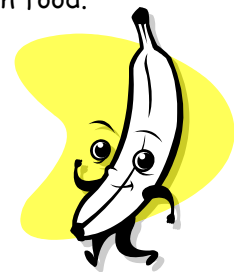
the different types of bananas...

today with a guest speaker from the Seneca County Cornell Cooperative Extension and 4-H Youth Development Program.

Your child participated in the following learning task which they will enjoy telling you about.

How to enjoy bananas, bananas, bananas.... with the help of an Adult

1. Wash your hands with warm, soapy, running water before working with food.
2. With the help of an adult peel the skin from the banana. Use the inside of the banana to make a delicious tropical snack or side dish with the help of adult. (Recipes in handout.)
3. Enjoy!



Facts on the Tropical Fruit: Bananas



Short history

Wild forms of the banana plant come originally from the Indo-Malaysian area and are now cultivated all over the tropical and sub-tropical continents.

Use

Bananas are delicious eaten with one's fingers after peeling off the skin. Depending on the type of banana unripe bananas are also cooked, fried or deep-fried a lot. Bananas are the basic food in many tropical countries.

Types

At this moment there are five different types of bananas:

- **Red bananas:** have a green/red peel and pink fruit flesh. They taste the same like yellow bananas. The provitamin carotene gives the red color to the red banana.
- **Fruit-bananas:** are the normal, yellow bananas, 15-30 cm. (6-12 inches).
- **Apple-bananas:** are smaller, 8-10 cm. ($3\frac{1}{2}$ - $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.), and ripen faster. They are also yellow.
- **The baby-banana (pisang susa):** is yellow as well and measures 6-8 cm.(3-4 in.). It is the sweetest of the banana family;
- **Baking bananas:** are 30 to 40 cm. (12-15 in.) large and are green, yellow or red-like. They cannot be eaten raw. They fulfill the role of the potato in the tropical countries. Plantains are a well-known variety sold in US markets.

Peculiar characteristics

- Is the most well known and eaten tropical fruit;
- Tropical fruit is usually picked unripe and has to ripen in the land of arrival. To make this process go faster bananas are treated with ethylene-gas. Normal bananas also ripen through ethylene -gas but exposing it to additional gas accelerates the process;
- Bananas are a good source of potassium;
- Red bananas are often dried and converted to "meal" which is used in many ways.

Description & storage

Long thick-skinned edible fruit that is yellow when ripe.

Keep bananas on a fruit dish in the living room at room temperature. If you want the bananas to ripen faster place the bowl in the sun. Like other tropical fruits and tomatoes and bell peppers, never store bananas in the refrigerator. Below 8 degrees Celsius (40 degree F.), the fruit will decay from the inside. These fruits will not ripen but will turn black in the refrigerator.

READ ON FOR RECIPES USING BANANAS....

Old Fashioned Banana Pudding

1 cup granulated sugar
3 eggs, beaten
1 dash salt
1 tablespoons cornstarch
2 cups milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3-4 ripe bananas, sliced
vanilla wafers



1. Mix sugar and eggs together.
2. Add salt, cornstarch, and milk.
3. Bring to boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly; until thickened.
4. Remove from heat; add vanilla and mix well.
5. In serving bowl, layer the wafers, bananas, and the pudding.
6. Pudding will need 10-20 minutes to cool and set to serve. If you are not serving right away be sure to keep pudding refrigerated. Do not cover bowl of pudding in refrigerator until pudding is completely chilled.

Baked Sweet Plantains (Baking Bananas)

4 ripe Plantains (baking bananas)

1/2 cup apple juice

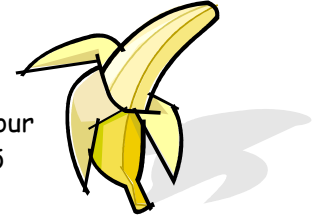
2 tbsp. molasses

1 tsp. ground cinnamon

1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg

1/2 tsp. ground ginger

Peel the ripe plantains, cut in half and split lengthwise. Place them in a covered baking dish with the rounded side up. In a measuring cup, mix together the apple juice, molasses, cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger, and pour over the plantains in the baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 45 minutes.



Tostones/Patacones with Plantains (Baking Bananas)

Vegetable oil for deep-frying

2 large green Plantains (baking bananas)

Salt to taste

Fill a large skillet 1/3 full with oil and heat to about 350 degrees. Peel plantains and cut crosswise into 1-inch-thick slices. Deep-fry plantain slices, without crowding the pan, 4 to 5 minutes or just until they begin to color very lightly. Turn and cook on the other side. Drain on paper towels.

When all the plantains are cooked and have cooled slightly, place a paper towel on top of each slice and, using your fist, flatten to about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick while they are still pretty warm.

After flattening, hold the tostones in a bowl with enough salted water to cover them.

For the second frying, heat the oil to about 375 degrees and return plantain slices to the skillet. Fry for another 1 to 2 minutes or until golden, turning once. They are done when they rise to the surface of the oil and make a hollow sound when tapped.

Drain over paper towels again, sprinkle with salt and serve hot.

Makes about 4 servings.

Traditionally served with white cheese, salsa and black bean dip.

