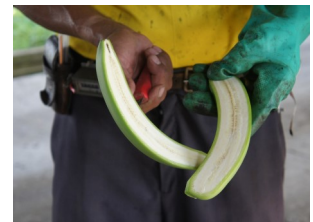




Reading Section - All About Bananas

The banana originated in the Malay Archipelago in South East Asia – Now known as Malaysia. There are over a thousand different types of banana – but most of them can't be eaten, as some of them grow wild and contain large, hard seeds. The most common banana is the 'Cavendish' others are small and sweet, with cute names like 'Lady Finger'.



The banana was brought to Europe by Portuguese sailors – who also took them on their travels to Africa and the Americas because they gave them quick bursts of energy and were one of the healthiest types of food they could eat. The country which grows the most bananas is India but most of the bananas we eat in supermarkets these days are grown in hot tropical climates such as South and Central America, Africa and the Caribbean



Panama Disease (also called banana wilt) is a disease that attacks the roots of banana plants. Panama disease is widespread throughout the tropics and can be found wherever vulnerable banana cultivars are grown. If a plantation should get an outbreak of this disease it could wipe out the entire crop of bananas.



People think bananas grow on trees but they don't. Banana plants are actually giant herbs that comes from a bulb in the ground called a 'corm', just like a daffodil! The banana fruits grow from a banana blossom in hanging clusters, also called a bunch. The fruits grow in rows called tiers or hands. There can be as many as twenty fruits to a hand, and as many as twenty tiers in a bunch. Bananas start off green and then turning yellow as they ripen.





Reading Section - All About Bananas

Bananas are one of the healthiest foods you can eat. That's why you see so many athletes and sports people eating them, because they give them quick bursts of energy. They can help to make our indigestion better, also help our body to make something called serotonin, which gives us feelings of well-being and happiness! Maybe that's why they are the most popular fruit in the world. Bananas are eaten much more than oranges, apples, grapes or any other fruit. They can be made into bread, into drinks such as beer and wine, and fried into chips and crisps like a potato.



If you buy a banana, don't keep it in the fridge as they will turn brown if you do. If they're still green when you buy them, place them with apples ; they'll soon ripen up. If they go soft and mushy, don't throw away them aware – make a nice banana cake or smoothie instead!

