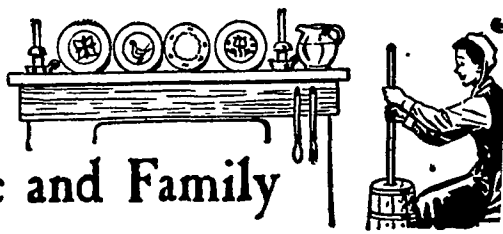


For the Farm Wife and Family



Banana Bonanza

By Mrs. Richard C. Spence

There used to be a bugaboo that bananas were hard to digest. Now doctors prescribe ripe bananas as one of baby's first solid foods — because they are so easily digested. Then along came another bugaboo — that bananas were fattening. Actually, a banana has only 88 calories.

Bananas contain almost no fat — less than 2/10 of 1%. Yet — unlike so many "diet" foods — they really satisfy your appetite. Beside that, they also give you a well-rounded supply of the vitamins and minerals you need for youthful vitality.

Bananas are more than just "digestible," too. Their smooth, bland texture and unique composition actually aid your digestion.

And bananas are such a blessing for people on low-sodium diets! Their delicious, natural flavor needs no embellishment — and the sodium content of a medium-sized banana is well under 0.5 mg.

What about cholesterol?

There's no cholesterol at all in bananas.

BANANA FACTS: When green tipped, bananas should be cooked. When golden yellow, they are ripe for eating out of hand or cooking. When flecked with brown, they are fully ripe and suitable for every use, perfect for infant feeding, ideal for blending into cakes, cookies, breads or milkshakes.

Bananas are best bought in the stage of ripeness you find them in the store. Then allow them to ripen completely at home at comfortable room temperature, about 70 degrees F. And remember, bananas are available the year 'round.

Bananas should not be placed in the refrigerator except to delay over-ripening after they are already fully ripe. Temperatures below 50 degrees F. retard ripening and

impart the delicate flavor. If bananas have ripened to the degree you like them, their usefulness may be extended for several days if placed in the refrigerator. The hydrator or vegetable compartment is best. A peel discoloration may appear after removal but the pulp will be flavorful.

The scars or blemishes which frequently appear on the peel of the banana in addition to the familiar brown flecks do not usually affect the eating quality of the fruit in any way. These scars or blemishes rarely go all the way through the peel.

It is not necessary to remove or scrape off the "strings" that sometimes cling to the pulp of the bananas. These "strings" are edible, but not as fine in texture as the pulp.

To keep sliced bananas from darkening when they must stand before serving, either dip the banana slices into or sprinkle them with canned pineapple juice, or fresh, canned or frozen orange, grapefruit, lemon or lime juice.

Bananas add extra nourishment and satisfying flavor to salads and salad dressings.

SPRINGTIME SALAD

- 1 package lime-flavored gelatin
- 1 package lemon-flavored gelatin
- 1 cup chicory, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup finely diced onion

1/4 cup thinly sliced radish
2 ripe bananas
Combine lemon and lime gelatins and dissolve according to package directions. Pour enough gelatin into a ring mold to make a thin layer and place in refrigerator to set. Place remaining gelatin in refrigerator and chill until slightly thickened or of a soupy consistency. Add dry mustard, pepper and salt to a chicory, toss well, mix in onion, radish and one peeled, sliced banana, fold into soupy gelatin.

Peel and slice second banana and arrange rounds on top of firm gelatin. Pour gelatin-vegetable mixture over banana layer in mold, being careful that all of the ingredients are well covered with gelatin. Chill until firm (3 to 4 hours). Unmold and serve with tangy dressing. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

QUICK DRESSING

Combine 1/2 cup mayonnaise, 1 mashed ripe banana, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1 tablespoon milk in mixing bowl. Stir until well blended. Makes about 3/4 cup.

FRUITED HAM SCALLOP

- 2 cups applesauce
- 1/4 cup firmly packed

brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
4 firm bananas
1 1/4 pound ham slice
Combine applesauce, sugar and nutmeg. Peel bananas and cut in half lengthwise. Arrange in casserole alternate layers of applesauce mixture and banana halves. Score edges of ham slice; place on top of fruit. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until ham is tender in a 350 degree oven. To serve: Cut ham into individual portions and spoon fruit over the top of each. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

SWEET POTATO SURPRISE

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon grated orange rind
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 bananas
- 2 cups crushed ginger-snap cookies

Cook sweet potatoes, peel and mash. Add butter, salt, pepper, orange rind, sugar and egg, mix well. Cut bananas into 2-inch pieces. Form mixture into 8 balls, with banana piece in center of each. Roll (Continued on Page 9)

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