Banana (Musa spp.)

Origin

The banana (picture, left) is native to Southeast Asia. It is thought that they were first harvested in Papua New Guinea.

Food Production

The banana is a fruit that grows in different sizes and colors. The fruit grows in clusters at the top of the tree or plant (picture, right). Bananas are the most popular fruit bought at supermarkets and grocery stores. You will also find bananas for sale at many gas stations and convenience stores.

Nutritional Qualities

Bananas are a main starch for many people in the tropics. They are a great source of vitamin B6, fiber, vitamin C, potassium and manganese.

Famous Dishes

Bananas are most often peeled and eaten raw (picture, left). However, they can be steamed, cooked in soups, or fried. This cooking banana usually refers to the plantain, a close relative of the banana. In South Asia food is sometimes wrapped in the banana leaf and steamed or grilled. The food is then eaten out of the leaf so nothing goes to waste.