

# JESSICA'S BANANA SUNSHINE LOAF

**From the Kitchen of:** Jessica Lofton-Williams, Community Engagement Manager, Fair Food Network

**Preparation Time:** 15 minutes | **Cook Time:** 60 minutes | **Yield:** 1 (9x5-inch) loaf

**Common Allergens:** Wheat

"I love baking and sharing recipes with my colleagues and friends. This banana bread is a plant-friendly twist on the traditional recipe that I've perfected over time. Paired with a hot cup of tea, it's my favorite way to start the day," says Jessica, who suggests saving old fruit by freezing it for baking.

"Growing up, my grandmother, mom, and I always did baking around the holidays. My favorite was always banana bread. I would ask for it all the time! Now that I am a mom, I realized how much my kids loved banana bread and how easy it was for me to prepare ahead. They love it with cream cheese or peanut butter in the morning. I love sharing a food tradition with them that my grandmother passed down."

## INGREDIENTS:

- 3 ripe bananas (mashed)
- 1/3 cup sunflower oil
- 2 cups of applesauce
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup of oatmeal
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- Nuts or chocolate chips (optional)

## HOW TO STORE BANANAS:

Ripen green bananas on the counter. Bananas can be refrigerated once ripe. Their skins will turn black, but they're still good to eat!

Never store bananas next to highly perishable produce - bananas release a gas known as ethylene, which accelerates ripening and decay.

## INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease a 9x5-inch loaf pan or line it with parchment paper.
- Mash the bananas in a mixing bowl until the bananas become smooth.
- Stir the sunflower oil into the mashed bananas. Add the applesauce and vanilla extract. Mix these wet ingredients together until they are well combined.
- Sprinkle the baking soda and salt over the mixture and stir. Gradually add the flour and oatmeal, mixing just until they have incorporated. Be careful not to overmix.
- Fold in the optional nuts, chocolate chips, or other extras if desired.
- Transfer the batter into the prepared loaf pan, spreading it out evenly. Sprinkle a little extra oatmeal over the top before baking for a crunchy finish.
- Bake the loaf for 50-60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. If the top begins browning too quickly, loosely cover it with aluminum foil for the last 10-15 minutes of baking.
- Remove the loaf from the oven and let the banana bread cool in the pan for about 10 minutes, then transfer it to a wire rack to cool completely.