



Ingredients	<p>Calcium, phosphorous, iron, potassium, vitamin A, niacin, vitamin C, chromium, sucrose, fructose, glucose, carotene.</p> <p>+ 35 pesticides; in 2009 4 were above the legal maximum residue levels, including bifenthrin in 2 of 1,323 samples and imazalil in 1 sample (link).</p> <p>Bifenthrin is an insecticide “highly toxic to terrestrial invertebrates” that, for humans, is a “possible human carcinogen” + in “low amounts ... can cause adverse health effects, such as dermal and respiratory tract irritation and neurological symptoms (e.g., dizziness and altered sensations)” (link).</p> <p>Imazalil is “a systemic fungicide for post harvest use on bananas” + is “highly irritating to the eye” and is ‘likely to be carcinogenic in humans” (link).</p>
Justice issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - occupational exposure & poisoning of farm workers by agrochemicals; - price wars between UK supermarkets eroding farm pay & conditions; - corporate & governmental union-busting among farm workers;
MoCC event/ place	
Information resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anon (2009) Q&A: the banana wars. <i>BBC News</i> 15 December (link) - Farquhar, I. (2006) <i>Collateral damage: how price wars between UK supermarkets helped to destroy livelihoods in the banana and pineapple supply chains</i>. Norwich: Banana Link (link) - Lawrence, F. (2010) Bitter fruit: the truth about supermarket pineapple. <i>The Guardian</i> 2 October (bananas are also part of this story link) - Smith, A. (2012) Does the British banana market make sense? <i>Fresh fruit portal</i> 17 December (link)
Activist events & resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Exchange values - images of invisible lives</i> (art work website + description) - <i>Make Fruit Fair</i> (campaign website & ‘movie’) - Bananas!* (documentary). <i>followthethings.com</i> December 2011 (link)

READING 1: “Bananas, along with bread, milk and baked beans are Known Value Items or KVIs. Price conscious consumers are likely to know how much these items cost and to use them to gauge the relative value for money offered by the different supermarket chains. ... if the KVIs are cheap, consumers will assume that other goods in the store are cheap, even if this is not in fact the case. KVIs are therefore particularly vulnerable to being used as pawns in the price wars between supermarkets. Of all the KVIs, bananas are possibly the most vulnerable, as gondolas of bananas are often located at the entrance to stores with their prices clearly displayed. The first thing many consumers see as they enter a supermarket is the price of a kilo of loose bananas or a special price” (Farquhar 2006 p.7 [link](#)).

READING 2: “In the 70s and the beginning of the 80s it was almost a source of pride to work in banana plantations. Good wages were paid; there was respect for the dignity of workers and for their human rights; there were collective agreements. There was a series of conditions, which allowed there to be social stability for families. There were wages which allowed workers to live in dignity. It was normal for a worker to have a small motorcycle or a bicycle. Every year, the banana workers would plan their holidays and they would travel from the banana growing areas to the metropolitan areas, including many people who themselves came from the metropolitan areas or from other provinces in the country to work on the plantations. ... 100% of the workers were organised [in unions]. ... In 1971, there was an agreement between Central American countries, [and] ... UPEB (the union of banana exporting countries), whereby when they exported the companies had to pay \$1 export tax, which was re-invested in the social and economic infrastructure of the banana areas. Thanks to this ... the government was able to invest in roads, bridges, schools, colleges ... Today it’s a disgrace to work in the banana and pineapple farms. Now the people who work in the plantations do so simply to survive. There’s no job security. ... The companies frequently argue that they can’t pay even basic wages, because the supermarkets in Europe or Great Britain or the US don’t pay adequate prices for the fruit. ... [Now] there is a powerful and accelerating process of impoverishment of the workers going on. There’s also a strong process of social disintegration ... If a worker has to work 3 months in a pineapple farm and then another 3 months in a banana plantation, because there’s no job stability, it’s a fact that there can be no family stability. So, we see increasing social problems which unfortunately our government has no ways of tackling, much less the companies. There are serious problems now with alcoholism, and drugs. Young people have no sense of any future” (Gilberth Bermudez, Costa Rican union leader in Farquhar 2006, p.3-4 [link](#)).

READING 3: “In 1977 Dow Chemical discovered that some of their California employees who had handled (pesticide dipromochloropropane) DBCP were sterile. Within months, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had suspended most uses of the chemical. Dow wrote to Standard Fruit Company that they were ceasing DBCP production and that Dole should return unused inventory. Dole wrote back that if Dow did not continue delivering the pesticide it was in breach of contract. Dow agreed to continue delivering DBPC only after Dole’s lawyers promised to indemnify Dow for any future liabilities stemming from its use. Dole complied with this request and stopped using DBCP only after it had depleted its last canister. Flash forward to the new century. Juan Jose Dominguez, a Los Angeles based personal injury lawyer, sees a news report on CNN about the widespread use of the pesticide in the 60s and 70s and its link to illness and sterility. In 2004 he makes an exploratory trip to the banana growing Chinandega province of Nicaragua and finds many aging, family-less men saying they were sickened by exposure. He registers 10,000 workers who claim to be afflicted and launches a lengthy lawsuit against Dole representing 12 allegedly sterile plaintiffs. This is no open and shut case though. Dole spares no expense to hire a top notch defense attorney who raises considerable doubts as to whether the plaintiffs were ever fertile or even if they truly became sterile” (Rabiner 2011 [link](#)).