Banana peels aren't always destined for the trash or compost anymore. They're making their way onto people's plates, replacing pork in "pulled peel" sandwiches and getting fried up into "bacon." And now, researchers reporting in ACS Food Science & Technology show that incorporating banana peel flour into sugar cookie batter makes the treats more healthful. In taste tests, cookies enriched with some banana peel flour were more satisfying than those baked with wheat flour alone.

Increasing the amount of the banana peel flour from 0 to 15% in the batches produced browner and harder products, which could be a result of the increased fiber content from the peels. In addition, cookies with banana peel flour were more healthful, having less fat and protein, higher amounts of phenols and better antioxidant activities than the conventional ones.

A trained panel determined that cookies with the smallest substitution of banana peel flour (7.5%) had the best texture and highest overall acceptability compared to the other batches. This batch also kept well for three months at room temperature—it tasted the same as the wheat-only versions after the lengthy storage period. Because cookies can be enriched with some banana peel flour without impacting their consumer acceptance, the researchers say this addition could make these baked goods more nutritious.


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