

BANOFI LEATHER COMPANY TURNING BANANA CROP WASTE INTO A PLANT-BASED LEATHER IN INDIA

October 2026

Banofi Leather is a StartUp company created in India by Jinali Mody, a biochemistry graduate from St. Xavier's College in Mumbai and the Yale School of Environment, that turns banana crop waste into a plant-based leather alternative

Made from banana stem fibre blended with natural binders and starches, the material looks, feels and even smells like animal leather. Banofi Leather is a step in the right direction towards saving animals, reducing toxic waste generation, providing farmers with additional income, upcycling crop waste, and protecting the planet.



The leather industry results in excessive carbon emissions, immense water usage, and the production of toxic waste as a byproduct of the tanning process. The Banofi company was founded in 2022 with the aim of tackling the escalating crop waste in [India, the world's largest producer of bananas](#), which generates 4 tons of waste for every 1 ton of fruit, much of which is dumped. For Banofi this provides an untapped and abundant source of raw material. The team saw a path to redefine the materials of the future, by upcycling banana crop waste into leather.

In particular, Banofi starts with the banana crop waste that is delivered to the team by 100 small farmers around their factory in Rajpur Sonarpur, West Bengal. In India, more than 100 million tonnes of banana crop waste are incinerated or dumped every year, so there's no shortage of raw material. The waste becomes a source of cellulose fibre, which is then processed with natural gums and adhesives, and coated with colour and other protectants to become the final leather-like material. The result generates 90 per cent less carbon emissions and uses 95 per cent less water than regular leather.

Banofi creates a plant-based leather from banana fibres, composed of Banana Crop Waste (37%), Natural Additives (60%) and Synthetic Additives (3%). From this waste the team extracts fibres, which serve as the primary raw material and then coated onto a fabric backing, resulting in a durable and robust material that is 90% bio-based.

Their proprietary material, Ban-o-Fi (Banana Fibre Leather), has a significantly lower environmental impact than both animal and plastic leather. Banofi continues to innovate and reduce its dependence on polymers. True sustainability is extremely challenging and is a mission to which the team is deeply dedicated.

The key features of Banofi leather are: soft hand feel; water resistance; durability; antifungal properties; and ease of cleaning. Banofi Leather is certified by PETA, REACH certified for Europe and CAL-PROP certified for the US.

Banofi has widespread applications across the fashion, furniture, automotive, and packaging industries.



Banofi has an important community impact. They source banana crop waste from more than 100 small-scale farmers who do not utilise this waste. These farmers are at the core of their business, providing the enterprise with the main ingredient for their process. By providing farmers with additional income for their crop waste, Banofi is disincentivizing crop burning practices and boosting household incomes by 30%. Women are also at the core of the work carried out at Banofi with 60% of the team being composed of women.

The Banofi leather production also has an important environmental impact because it reduces water use by 95 per cent, cuts carbon emissions by more than 90 per cent and eliminates 100 per cent of toxic waste.

Jinali Mody, the CEO of Banofi Leather completed her undergraduate studies in biochemistry at St. Xavier's College in Mumbai and earned a master's degree at the Yale School of Environment. She has been recognized internationally for her leadership in sustainable fashion, winning the [Hult Prize, the world's largest social entrepreneurship competition](#), presented by Stella McCartney, a pioneer in sustainable fashion. She also won the Sustainable Material of the Year Award in India and the Wege Prize, a circularity-focused competition judged by experts from the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. She has received recognition from the World Economic Forum and support from the [MIT Climate and Energy Prize](#). The company has also received notable support from the Ministry of Agriculture in India, including the Rkvy-Raftaar grant for its work with smallholder farmers. Their achievements were further recognized by UN SDGs, and the company received the Best Vegan Leather accolade from PETA India. [In 2025 Jinali Mody was recognized as a winner of the UNEP Young Champions of the Earth Award.](#)

The Banofi website underlines that leather comes from animal hides, linked to livestock farming, a major source of methane. Its production has a high environmental cost in terms of water use, land use, and toxic waste. Vegan leather often uses fossil-fuel-based plastics, posing additional challenges. In fashion, raw material production is the largest source of emissions, making material choices crucial for reducing the industry's footprint. Banofi is changing what materials are fundamentally made of with a leather-like material that is made from over 95% plant-based content, uses 93% less water, reduces carbon emissions by 97%, and produces zero wastewater

The Banofi Leather materials-science startup company is turning banana crop waste into a plant-based leather alternative. Made from banana stem fibre blended with natural binders and starches, the material looks, feels and even smells like animal leather. The company now employs a team that is 60% women and partners with around 100 smallholder banana farmers, providing them with additional income from stems that would have previously been burned or left to rot. Banofi products are attracting the attention of global fashion houses, proving that agricultural waste can be transformed into durable, high-performance alternatives that contribute to a sustainable future.

To know more

[Banofi company website](#)

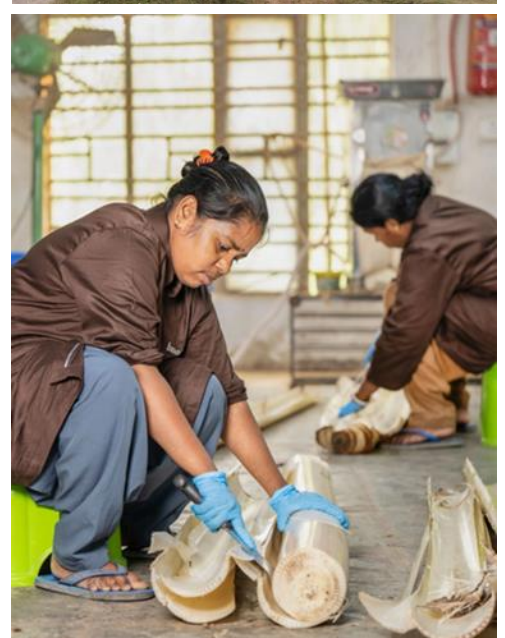
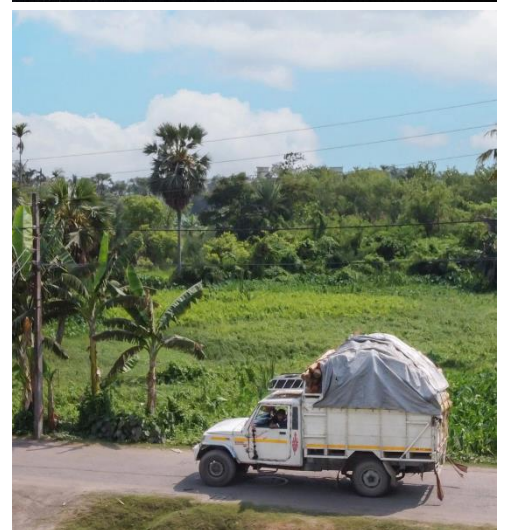
[Banofi Leather in Facebook.com](#)

[Banofi Leather in Facebook.com video](#)

[Banofi leather in thenodmag.com](#)

[Banofi Leather in globenewswire.com](#)

[Banofi Leather in sdgs.un.org](#)



[Banofi leather in dezeen.com](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/09/16/banofi-biofab-fair-2025/)

[Jinali Mody in news.yale.edu](https://news.yale.edu/2025-09-16/banofi-biofab-fair-2025)

[Jinali Mody in india.un.org](https://india.un.org/en/stories/2025/09/16/banofi-biofab-fair-2025)

[Jinali Mody Young Champions of the Earth Award UNEP 2025](https://www.unep.org/youngchampions/2025/09/16/banofi-biofab-fair-2025)

[Banofi Leather insolve.mit.edu](https://insolve.mit.edu/2025/09/16/banofi-biofab-fair-2025)

[Banofi Leather in cleanindiajournal.com](https://www.cleanindiajournal.com/2025/09/16/banofi-biofab-fair-2025)

[Banofi Lether in madeforplanet.com](https://www.madeforplanet.com/2025/09/16/banofi-biofab-fair-2025)

[Banofi Leather in climatehaven.tech](https://www.climatehaven.tech/2025/09/16/banofi-biofab-fair-2025)

