

## BANANA COOLER

40" (or a little longer) × 4" {when dry}

### BACKGROUND

◆ Cross-linked polyacrylamide is a polymeric material that adsorbs water molecules at the molecular level. (One internet source says that one pound of this polymer can adsorb about 50 gallons of water.) Among the water molecules adsorbed on the polymer, a few "hot" molecules have enough energy to escape (evaporate). It follows that the remaining molecules are, on the average, cooler. Here is another way to look at it: The heat from your body is absorbed by water molecules attached to the polymer; that heat is enough to enable the water molecules to escape, taking your body heat with them. (You feel chilly when you get out of a swimming pool in Albuquerque for the same reason.) By putting a few crystals of this polymer in a fabric tube, we create a sausage-shaped fabric noodle, rather like a banana, that feels really nice when placed around your neck on a hot day in a dry climate.

◆ *The Quilt Works, Inc.* is indebted to information from a variety of sources for this pattern. At our First Friday Sew-In, we have made quite a few of these Banana Coolers for the Albuquerque Rescue Mission and for our troops in the deserts overseas.

### MATERIALS

- ◆ ¼ yd of cotton, cut selvage to selvage.
- ◆ 2 tsp (teaspoons) cross-linked polyacrylamide crystals. You can find this at many garden stores, sold for keeping the soil moist around plantings. JRM Chemical, Inc., sells this material under the trade name "Soil Moist" granules.

### CONSTRUCTION

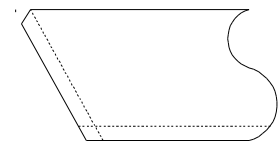
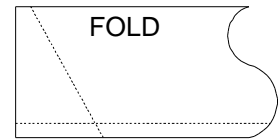
- ◆ Fold the fabric in half lengthwise, right sides together.
- ◆ On each end, draw a diagonal line, starting ½" from the end at the fold, and ending 3" from the end at the raw edges. [figure at the right]
- ◆ Sew along these lines, starting at the raw edges and backstitching when you reach the fold. Then sew along the raw edges (lengthwise), leaving a 3" gap (for filling with the crystals) in the center.

I like to backstitch on both sides of the gap.

- ◆ Cut off the ends, leaving a ½" seam allowance, and trim the points.

[figure at the right]

- ◆ Turn the Banana right sides out; be sure to push out the points. Press.
- ◆ Ten inches (10") from each end, sew a seam edge to edge, backstitching both at the start and at the finish; this makes a pocket for the crystals in the center of the Banana. [figure below]



- ◆ Spoon 2 tsp crystals into the pocket.
- ◆ Top stitch (continuously) all four sides with a ¼" seam allowance.

### USE

- ◆ Soak the Banana in water for about 45 minutes. Pat the Banana gently with a towel to get rid of excess moisture. Tie it around you neck.
- ◆ Now that you have discovered what a neat idea this is, make one for someone who really needs one.