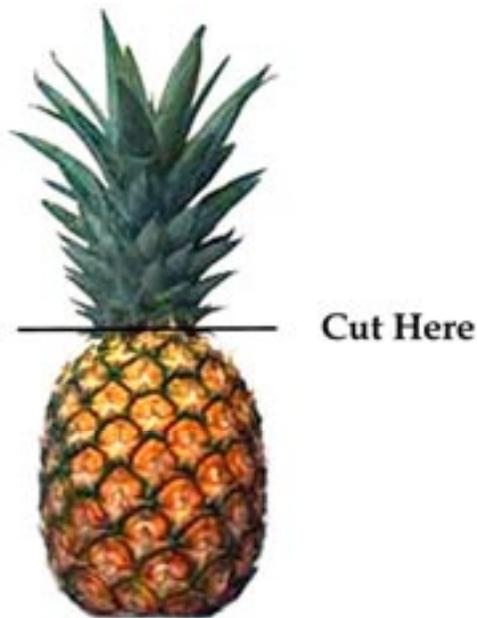


Growing a Pineapple at Home

Pineapple plants can be propagated from fresh pineapples purchased at the grocery store.

1. Choose a healthy pineapple from the store. The pineapple should still have green leaves attached to the top and not have any mold or be excessively dried. If the small leaves in the center of the top pull out easily, you should try a different pineapple.
2. Cut the leaves off of the pineapple at the point where the leaves come out at the top. Do not leave any portion of the fruity part of the pineapple attached to the leaves.
3. Pull off the lower, outer leaves to reveal the stem. Continue removing the lowest leaves until 5-10 larger leaves are left plus the many small leaves hidden inside. This should expose 1/2 - 1 inch of stem tissue.
4. Place the shoot in some water about 1/2 inch deep. The bases of the leaves should not be resting in the water. A drinking glass works well to keep the shoot upright. The water should be changed every couple of days to prevent rotting.
5. Place the shoot in a bright spot that receives little or no direct sunlight. Roots should begin to form within the next few weeks.
6. After the roots have formed, your new pineapple plant can be transferred into a pot or garden location with well-draining soil.



General Information about Pineapples

Common Name: Pineapple

Scientific Name: *Ananas comosus* (Bromeliaceae family)

The pineapple plant is a herbaceous perennial, 2.5 - 5 ft. high with a spread of 3 - 4 ft.

At blooming time, the stem elongates and enlarges near the apex and puts forth a cluster of small purple or red flowers. Hummingbirds pollinate the flowers, which usually develop small, hard seeds. Seeds are generally not found in commercially grown pineapples.

The oval to cylindrical-shaped, compound fruit develops from many small fruits fused together. It is both juicy and fleshy with the stem serving as the fibrous core. The tough, waxy rind may be dark green, yellow, orange-yellow or reddish when the fruit is ripe. The flesh ranges from nearly white to yellow. In size the fruits are up to 12 in. long and weigh 1 to 10 pounds or more.

Plant Care:

Pineapples should be planted where the temperature remains warmest, such as the south side of a home, or in a sunny portion of the garden or home.

The best soil for the pineapple is a well-drained sandy loam with a high organic content. The plant cannot stand waterlogging and if there is an impervious subsoil, drainage needs to be improved.

The plant is surprisingly drought tolerant, but adequate soil moisture is necessary for good fruit production.

Nitrogen is essential for healthy plant and fruit development; therefore, use of a good fertilizer is important. Pineapples should be fertilized every 2-3 months or by following the package instructions for small shrubs.

The following websites can provide you with additional information about pineapples:

History and Cultivation:

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/morton/pineapple.html>

<http://www.crfp.org/pubs/ff/pineapple.html>

Propagation:

<http://www.desert-tropicals.com/Plants/Pictorials/pineapple/pineapplecutting.htm>

http://www.gardenbed.com/plant/gbd_p_ap11.cfm

Recipes:

<http://homecooking.about.com/library/archive/blfruit51.htm>

Department of Botany and Plant Pathology, Purdue University

<http://www.btny.purdue.edu/>