#### **UF IFAS Extension** UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

# **Ananas comosus Pineapple<sup>1</sup>**

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### Introduction

The 24 to 30-inch-long, stiff, bright green leaves have spiny tips and margins. Leaves arise from a tight rosette. Pineapples are often planted for their tropical appearance and as a horticultural novelty. The fruit appears on top of a central stalk after a year or more.

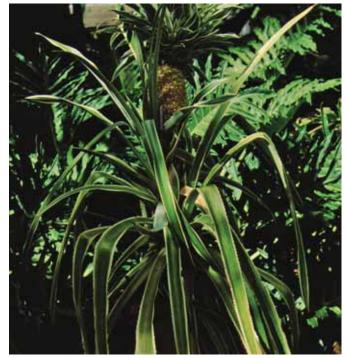


Figure 1. Full form—*Ananas comosus*: pineapple. Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Leaf—*Ananas comosus*: pineapple. Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 3. Flower—*Ananas comosus*: pineapple. Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

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Figure 4. Fruit—Ananas comosus: pineapple.

## **General Information**

Scientific name: Ananas comosus Pronunciation: uh-NAN-us ko-MO-sus Common name(s): pineapple Family: Bromeliaceae Plant type: perennial; herbaceous USDA hardiness zones: 10 through 11 (Figure 5) Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round Origin: not native to North America Invasive potential: not known to be invasive Uses: specimen; fruit; ground cover; border; accent; culinary

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant



Figure 5. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

### Description

Height: 1 to 3 feet Spread: 3 to 5 feet Plant habit: round Plant density: moderate Growth rate: slow Texture: medium

#### Foliage

Leaf arrangement: most emerge from the soil, usually without a stem Leaf type: simple Leaf margin: spiny Leaf shape: linear Leaf venation: parallel Leaf type and persistence: evergreen Leaf blade length: 18 to 36 inches Leaf color: green Fall color: no fall color change Fall characteristic: not showy

#### Flower

Flower color: red Flower characteristic: summer flowering

#### Fruit

Fruit shape: oval
Fruit length: 6 to 12 inches
Fruit cover: fleshy
Fruit color: yellow; brown
Fruit characteristic: suited for human consumption; persists on the plant

#### **Trunk and Branches**

Trunk/bark/branches: usually with one stem/trunk Current year stem/twig color: not applicable Current year stem/twig thickness: not applicable

### Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun Soil tolerances: slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam Drought tolerance: high Soil salt tolerance: unknown Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

#### Other

**Roots:** usually not a problem **Winter interest:** no special winter interest **Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding **Pest resistance:** very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect plant health or aesthetics

### **Use and Management**

Although the plant will tolerate full sun to fairly dark conditions inside, pineapple is most attractive as an ornamental if given some protection from full sun. Well-drained soil is most suitable for best growth. The plant can be used as a specimen, or grouped as a groundcover in a mass planting. Plant on four-foot centers to allow plants room to spread their foliage. Do not plant in areas where children play because the spines can injure them if they contact the leaves.

The cultivar 'Variegatus' is grown for its striking variegated foliage and is quite popular.

Propagation is by dividing the suckers from the base of the parent plant and also by rooting the leafy top of a mature fruit.

#### **Design Considerations**

The bold form and coarse texture of the pineapple make it perfect for containers and highly visible spaces in the landscape. Use with plants that are softer with small foliage and low growing mounding or spreading forms. Medium and light green foliage in the companion plants will highlight the bright green leaves of the pineapple. Pair with plants with more texture in the foliage to contrast with the smooth stiff leaves. Use plants with small to medium flowers with cool bright colors such as purples and blues, to contrast with the golden color of the pineapple fruit. Use large masses of companion plants around the base or in front of the pineapples when they are planted in a mass.

#### **Pests and Diseases**

Mites, scales, and mealy-bugs can be serious pest problems.

No diseases are of major concern.