



Pineapple

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Site Selection: Site must have well drained, sandy/loam soil, preferably with a pH in the range of 4.5–6.0.

Ground Preparation: Root knot nematode resistant green manure sorghum crop (Sudax, Jumbo) should be ploughed in six weeks before planting. Planting mounds should each be 65 cm wide and 30 cm high with 1.5-2.0 m between centres. Incorporate Dolomite at 2-3 kg/100m of row and superphosphate at 4.5 kg/100m of row. Fertiliser mix at planting of NPKS 13:2:13:19 at a rate of 4.5 kg/100m of row.

Control weeds using weed mat or a pre- or post-emergent herbicide.

Varieties:

- “Smooths” have large sweet fruit, very few prickles on leaves, recommended for home gardeners.
- “Roughs” have small sweet fruit, very prickly leaves, commercially grown type.

Planting Material:

- Tops (from the top of the fruit) are slow growing and take two years to harvest; suitable for home gardens.
- Slips (develop from the base of the fruit) can be used but are not preferred, takes 12-18 months to harvest
- Suckers (the preferred material) develop from the base of the stem, approximately 12-18 months to harvest.

Planting material can be stored for six months in a cool dry place.

Treat planting material with insecticide dip to control mealybug, ie: Diazinon 800 g/L @ 65ml/100L of water + 1L of white oil (Infopest November 2004).

Plant Spacings: Plant spacing of 30-40 cm x 45 cm in a double row along the mound (25,000–40,000 plants/ha).

Irrigation: Do not use overhead watering, use drippers at a spacing of 0.5 m, or tape. Do not over water newly planted material. Reduce watering before flower initiation. During dry periods water every one to two weeks. Apply no more than 25 mm at a time. Maintain water up to two weeks before harvest. Over watering causes root and fruit rots.

Nutrition: Apply NPKS fertiliser mix (2 kg/100 m of row, of 13:2:13:19) every month. Zinc sulphate at 100 g/100 L as a foliar spray and Solubor at 10 g/100 L every alternate month until flower initiation.

Do not fertilise three weeks before flower initiation, and three weeks before harvest.

Fertiliser can be applied as an overhead soluble foliar spray, or as a solid to the ground. Avoid getting solid fertiliser into the throat of the plant.

Cropping: Natural flowering occurs in September-December with a crop in November–February. Flower initiation is difficult in the Northern Territory. Contact DPIFM for further information.

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Pests: Mealybugs, nematodes, symphylids and birds.

Diseases: Root and top rot, fruitlet core rot, and water rot, and various nutrient deficiencies.

Sunburn: Major problem, must protect exposed side of fruit.

Harvest: Pick between first colour to half colour.

Post Harvest: Avoid bruising as fruit are prone to fruit rots. Fruit can be stored at 14-20°C and 80-90% humidity for up to two weeks.

Refer to the Pineapple Fact Sheet – FF11.

Reference: www.dpi.qld.gov.au/thematiclists/2557.html