

HOME GROUNDS FACT SHEET



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Nassau County



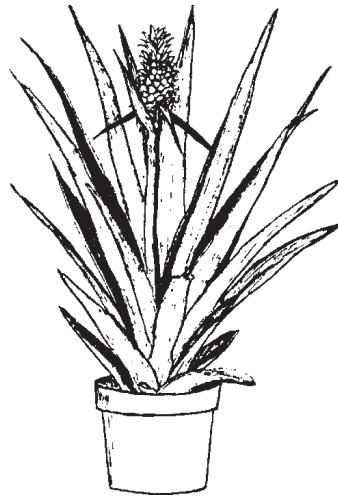
Horticulture Center
Demonstration & Community Gardens
at East Meadow Farm
832 Merrick Avenue
East Meadow, NY 11554
Phone: 516-565-5265

Pineapple Plant

A succulent fruit, the pineapple (*Ananas comosus*) can be an interesting addition to a houseplant collection. To start your own plant, select a ripe pineapple with good foliage.

Rooting

Grasp the base of the leaves in one hand and the fruit in the other hand and twist until they separate. Remove the lower few leaves. Dusting the base with rooting hormone hastens rooting, but is not essential. Pineapples can be rooted in water or soil. To root in water, place the top of the pineapple in a glass so the water comes up to the base of the leaves. Do not submerge the foliage. As soon as root hairs begin to appear plant your new pineapple in soil. To root in soil or transplant a water-started plant, use a 50-50 mix of peat and sand, peat and perlite or cactus soil with a handful of peat mixed in. Do not bury the leaves. The medium must be kept damp, but not wet. Good drainage is essential.



Flowering

Field grown plants produce fruit every 18 months in the tropics. As houseplants, pineapple plants are slow growers and mature in 24-30 months. When mature, you can force the plant into bloom by placing it in a clear plastic bag with a cut apple for five days. The ethylene gas produced by the apple stimulates flowering. Remove the plant after five days and it should bloom within two to three months. (Caution: this procedure for forcing bloom is **only for bromeliads** because ethylene gas shortens the

life of other plants or causes their leaves to drop. Avoid keeping cut flowers in the vicinity of ethylene producing agents such as apples, bananas and other fruit because they will reduce their lives.)

Cultural Requirements

After a root system has developed, place your pineapple plant in the sunniest window in the house. Remember they grow outdoors in the tropics. Keep your plant outside from May 30 to September 1. Harden it off slowly or it will sunburn. Keep the soil slightly moist. Feed it with a liquid houseplant fertilizer every 2 weeks. During the winter allow the soil to dry between waterings and do not fertilize. Pineapple plants enjoy a good misting year round.

Fruiting

When the fruit begins to form, check to see if it needs additional support. Home-grown plants often have weak flower stalks that may not be strong enough to support the heavy pineapple.

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Winter Care of Fuchsias



Fuchsias are outstanding for their beautiful flowers of pink, red, salmon, purple and white - some blooms even produce tones of contrasting shades and colors. Although these plants do well on a porch or in the yard during the summer, they are difficult to grow indoors under normal house conditions. If, however, you

decide to bring them through the winter, they must be provided with a dormant period during November and December. Place in a dimly-lit, cool spot (about 50°F.), prune back to about 1/3 of the growth and water just enough to keep it alive.

About the middle of January, return the plant to more light, with a temperature no higher than 60°F. Water sparingly and keep in this location until new growth begins. Then cut away all dead and weak wood, move to a brightly-lit spot and begin to water, keeping the soil evenly moist, not soggy. Overwatering causes leaf yellowing and drop. If necessary, replant into pots having adequate drainage holes to allow excess water to drain easily. Fuchsias are heavy feeders; give a weekly application of a 5-10-5 water-soluble plant food during this growing period. As soon as the weather permits, about May 15, move the plants outside to an open but lightly shady area for them to flower profusely all summer long.

Rooting

Fuchsias are easily propagated during the summer months. For best results, take cuttings early (by mid to late August). They should be about 4" in length and have 2-3 sets of leaves. Strip-off the bottom set and any flowers or buds that may be present on the vegetative shoots. Root in a soilless mixture such as 1/2 peat moss and 1/2 perlite. Keep media moist but not soggy. Cuttings root in about 3 weeks.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Considerations

IPM is a common sense approach to pest control and plant care. It employs a number of measures to prevent, control or reduce plant problems. These include using resistant plant varieties, proper plant selection and placement, good aftercare and biological and/or mechanical controls. As a last resort, after all other remedies have been explored, a pesticide* that is least toxic to people and natural predators, can be considered. Prior to using any pesticides, plants should always be monitored for the degree of infestation and a sensible control measure considered.

* A pesticide is a substance that kills, or attempts to kill, a particular pest, e.g. **insecticide**, **fungicide**, **herbicide**, etc.

Insects

Fuchsias are continually plagued by white fly, especially if the insects were brought indoors on the plants. Thoroughly wash undersides of leaves where pests reside. Some control is achieved by spraying with insecticidal soap, or neem. Chemical pesticides are available. If you choose to use chemical pesticides, contact your local Cooperative Extension office for specific recommendations. Be sure to follow the label directions.

Fuchsias are also susceptible to aphids. Spray with insecticidal soap according to label directions.

"This publication contains pesticide recommendations. Changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly and human errors are still possible. Some materials mentioned may no longer be available, and some uses may no longer be legal. All pesticides distributed, sold or applied in New York State must be registered with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Questions concerning the legality and/or registration status for pesticide use in New York State should be directed to the appropriate Cornell Cooperative Extension specialist or your regional DEC office (631) 444-0340. Read the label before applying any pesticide. Cornell Cooperative Extension and its employees assume no liability for the effectiveness or results of any chemicals for pesticide usage. No endorsement of products is made or implied."

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