

## Pineapple Cultivation Guide

**Introduction** Pineapple (*Ananas comosus*) is a tropical fruit known for its sweet, tangy taste and high nutritional value. It is rich in vitamins C and B, fiber, and antioxidants. Pineapple cultivation is widely practiced in tropical and subtropical regions and is a profitable fruit crop due to its high market demand.

### Steps to Harvest/Cultivate

1. **Selection of Variety:**
  - Choose high-yielding, disease-resistant varieties suited for local climatic conditions.
  - Popular varieties include Queen, Kew, Mauritius, and Smooth Cayenne.
2. **Soil Preparation:**
  - Pineapple thrives in well-drained sandy-loam or lateritic soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5.
  - The land should be plowed and leveled properly before planting.
  - Organic manure or compost should be applied to improve soil fertility.
3. **Planting:**
  - Pineapple is propagated through suckers, slips, or crowns from mature fruits.
  - It is best planted at the onset of the rainy season.
  - Recommended spacing is 60 cm x 30 cm for high-density planting.
4. **Watering:**
  - Pineapple requires moderate irrigation, especially during dry spells.
  - Drip irrigation is preferred for water efficiency.
  - Avoid water stagnation to prevent root rot.
5. **Fertilization:**
  - Apply nitrogen (10-12 g/plant), phosphorus (4-6 g/plant), and potassium (10-12 g/plant) for better growth.
  - Organic fertilizers such as compost and farmyard manure improve fruit quality.
6. **Weed Management:**
  - Regular weeding is necessary to reduce competition for nutrients and water.
  - Mulching with straw or black polythene sheets helps suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.
7. **Pest and Disease Control:**
  - Common pests include mealybugs, fruit borers, and scale insects. Neem oil or biological pesticides can help control infestations.
  - Diseases like root rot, wilt, and leaf spot can be managed by maintaining proper field hygiene and using fungicides when necessary.
8. **Flower Induction:**
  - Flowering in pineapple can be induced using chemicals like ethep or calcium carbide.
  - This practice ensures uniform fruiting and better yield.
9. **Harvesting:**
  - Pineapple is ready for harvest 12-18 months after planting when the fruit turns yellow and develops a sweet aroma.
  - Harvesting should be done carefully using a sharp knife to avoid damage to the plant.

#### 10. Post-Harvest Processing:

- Fruits should be cleaned, sorted, and graded before marketing.
- Pineapple can be consumed fresh or processed into juice, canned products, and dried fruit.

**Conclusion** Pineapple cultivation is a lucrative agricultural venture due to its high demand in local and international markets. By following proper agronomic practices, efficient irrigation, and pest management techniques, farmers can achieve high yields and profitability. The fruit's versatility and health benefits make it a valuable crop for commercial farming.

