Ananas comosus ‘Smooth Cayenne’ Spineless Pineapple

Edward F. Gilman

Introduction

The 24- to 30-inch-long, stiff, bright green leaves of the species have spiny tips and margins (Figure 1). Because this cultivar has no spines and variegated or stripped leaves, it is well suited for planting in the landscape. Each leaf has a wide green band down the center with a band of yellow on either side. 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.

General Information

Scientific name: Ananas comosus ‘Smooth Cayenne’
Pronunciation: uh-NAN-us ko-MO-sus
Common name(s): spineless pineapple
Family: Bromeliaceae
Plant type: perennial; herbaceous
USDA hardiness zones: 10 through 11 (Figure 2)
Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: accent; border; ground cover; mass planting
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Figure 1. Spineless pineapple.

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.


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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: entire
Leaf shape: linear
Leaf venation: parallel
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: 18 to 36 inches
Leaf color: yellow
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: green; yellow
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: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay
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
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect plant health or aesthetics

Use and Management
Although the plants 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. They can be used as a specimen, or grouped as a ground cover in a mass planting. Plant on 4-foot centers to allow plants room to spread their foliage. The spineless cultivars including 'Smooth Cayenne' are recommended for planting in residential and commercial landscapes as ornamentals.

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

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