



PINEAPPLE GUAVA

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INTRODUCTION

A guava for North Florida? Originally from Brazil, this cold-hardy guava can be grown as far north as middle Georgia. The trees are evergreen, with striking blue-green leaves that are silvery white underneath. Plants bloom in May and are covered with small orchid-like pink and crimson blooms. The fleshy pink petals are a delicious treat and have a sweet flavor and texture that melts in your mouth like cotton candy. By August the plum-shaped fruit are ready to eat and are harvested when they fall to the ground.



Simply slice open and scoop out the delectable creamy white flesh. The flavor is considered to be the best in the world by many true guava lovers! Use fresh in fruit salad or make guava jelly and jam.

Pineapple guavas are one of the easiest, most problem-free fruits you can grow - a little care will go a long way with this tree. Pineapple guavas need cross-pollination - be sure to get at least 2 plants.

USES IN THE LANDSCAPE

Pineapple guavas grow to approximately 18 feet tall. When lightly pruned, they develop into graceful small trees. They can also be trimmed into bold, short hedges or tall thick privacy screens. The misty blue-green foliage blends well with the tropical broad leaves of the Loquat and Citrus trees for a truly edible tapestry hedge.

PLANTING AND CULTURE

SITE SELECTION

Well-drained sandy soils are preferred, but pineapple guavas will grow on many soil types if good drainage is provided. Trees will grow more vigorously and produce more fruit in full sun.

SOIL PREPARATION AND PLANTING

Pineapple guavas prefer slightly acid soil (pH 5.5-6.5), but soils of up to moderate alkalinity are readily tolerated. If you are in doubt about the acidity of your soil, take a sample to the Florida Cooperative Extension Agent in your county for a soil test. Dig a planting hole approximately twice as big as the pot and twice as deep. Enrich the planting hole with peat moss, compost or pine bark mixed with soil dug from the hole (50:50 mix). Remove the plant from the pot, gently loosen the root ball and place in the planting hole. The pineapple guava should be planted at or slightly above the same level which it grew in its pot. Fill the planting hole with the mix of soil and organic matter; gently tamp it in. Water thoroughly to settle the roots and eliminate air pockets. Do NOT put fertilizer in the planting hole. Only apply fertilizer if it is the correct time of year (see Fertilization section below).

If desired, construct a water basin around the base of the tree approximately 36 inches in diameter. Mulch in spring and summer with approximately 4-6 inches of mulch.

FERTILIZATION

We use and recommend the Espoma line of organic fertilizers. Espoma's Citrus Tone is a good choice for pineapple guava trees. When not available look for an organic mix that contains an analyst of roughly 5-2-6. Make sure they contain iron, zinc, manganese, magnesium, molybdenum, copper and boron. These minor elements are very important to plants and most soils are low in these elements. Application rates vary according to type and age of plant, so read the instructions on the bag and fertilize accordingly. Be sure to spread the fertilizer evenly under the entire canopy of the plant avoiding a 2-inch area around the trunk. Water or rake in. Fertilize 3 times each year in February, May and late July/early August. Never fertilize after August as the tree needs to go dormant.

WATER

The first year is a critical time for the establishment of a new pineapple guava. Water thoroughly twice a week on light soils and once a week on clay soils. Soak the entire root system deeply. Pineapple guavas should receive at least 1 inch of water each week for best growth and fruit production, but established trees are drought resistant.

PRUNING AND CARE

Pineapple guavas require little pruning. Remove dead and damaged wood when appropriate. Prune as desired if using them in a hedge or privacy screen. Pineapple guavas are essentially free from pests and diseases.