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## Turiacu Pineapple: A New Cultivar Native from the Eastern Periphery of Amazonia, Maranhão State, Brazil

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### Abstract

The centre of diversity of the genus *Ananas* is currently concentrated in an area located between 10°N to 10°S and 55° to 75°W. Brazil is the greatest centre of genetic diversity of pineapple in the world, and next to *Ananas comosus*, several other *Ananas* species as well as related genera such as *Pseudananas* and *Bromelia*, all of which with endemic occurrence in Amazonia. The present study physically and chemically characterises pineapple fruits as well as biometric plant characters of the ‘Turiacu’ cultivar. This cultivar is of great importance to Maranhão State, is native to eastern Amazonia and derived from selection process of smallholder farmers that developed an agroecosystem known as ‘Tacuruba’. Rural poverty in the region is great and is associated with slash and burn shifting cultivation. Our field experiment was conducted from 2007 to 2009 and investigated the effects of different spacings in simple rows. Our data are compiled from samples of 12 fruits per plot, and four plot replications. The slips used for planting got 35 to 40 cm. We analysed our data with descriptive statistics such as general averages of each character and linear correlation coefficients between nine main characters. The average fruit weight of the ‘Turiacu’ cultivar (1620 grams), the medium crown, the content of total soluble solids (16,1°Brix) and the yellow pulp colour confirm its outstanding quality and acceptance in local and regional markets and constitute a product suitable to markets of increasing exigency. The high production of slips per plant (11,3 slips) assure cultivation in new areas. Fruit form is unstable, with a predominance to conic structure. Acidity is lower than that of other cultivars, requiring adjustments in harvest period when destined for industrial uses. Here we propose a process of agroecological transition in Turiacu pineapple cultivation, in order to guarantee the sustainability of this agroecosystem.

**Keywords:** *Ananas comosus* var. *comosus* (L.) Merrill, fruit quality, native fruit, plant biometry