

# 4-H +Me = Health: Power Up with Pineapples and Papayas

**What will we learn?** 4-H members will learn how to safely cut a pineapple and a papaya into pieces.

**Why is this important?** Eating more fruits and vegetables is a goal for many people, but learning how to cut up fresh fruit and vegetables can sometimes be intimidating. Many people forgo buying produce if they don't know how to prepare it.

**Prep time needed:** 20 minutes shopping

**Activity length:** 20 minutes

**What will we need?**

*Preparation:*

- Pineapple(s) (choose pineapple with firm, golden to brown skin that is not too green with loose leaves that are not brown or wilted) and papayas (if eating within a day, choose one with deep orange or red skin; papayas with yellow skin are not fully ripe and will need additional time to ripen; green papayas are only good for specific types of cuisine, such as Asian salads—do not choose them for this activity)

*At the meeting:*

- Table
- Sink with running water
- Cutting board
- Sharp knife
- Long, serrated knife
- Towels
- Melon baller

**What do I need to do?**

*Preparation:*

1. Purchase a pineapple and papaya from the grocery store.
2. Optional: Purchase additional fruit to display whole and/or in half.



*At the meeting:*

1. Set up a work station with your equipment for the demonstration.
2. As you demonstrate how to cut each fruit, share the facts about each fruit with your club members.
3. Pineapple facts: Pineapples are packed with Vitamin C! Although they are originally from South America, today most pineapples come from Southeast Asia. Pineapples spread around the world because they were kept on ships to prevent sailors from getting scurvy. You can even grow your own pineapple plant by cutting the “crown” cut off a store-bought pineapple and allowing it to dry for 2-3 days before planting it. However, each pineapple plant only produces one pineapple every two years.
4. How to cut the pineapple: Place the pineapple on its side and use the knife to cut off the leaves along with 1/2 inch off the top of the pineapple itself. Turn the pineapple upright onto its base and place the knife on top of the fruit. Cut the pineapple in half and rinse the knife. Then, cut each half in half again, cutting straight down through the center core. Hold each quarter section of pineapple with one hand and slice down to remove the core. The core is easy to distinguish from the edible fruit because it is more fibrous and lighter in color. Repeat with the remaining quarters. Once the core is removed, cut the pineapple from the skin by running the knife under the flesh of the pineapple, cutting it to remove the edible portion. Finally, cut the pineapple into either wedges or cubes. To store the pineapple, place the cut pieces in an airtight container and refrigerate.
5. Papaya facts: If you plan on eating your papaya within a day of purchasing it from the grocery store, choose one with deep orange or red skin. Papayas with yellow spots are not fully ripe and require more time to ripen. You may also see green papayas in the store, but they are only good for very specific types of cuisine, such as Asian salads. Unless you are specifically looking for them, green papayas should be avoided (unless you are planning to cook them) because their flavor is not at all similar to the flavor of ripe papayas.
6. How to cut the papaya: First, wash the papaya; the peel may contain traces of fertilizer and/or dirt. Careful washing will prevent contamination of the pulp. Cut the papaya in half, then scrape the seeds off. You can save the seeds in a bowl; they have a peppery flavor and can be used as a substitute for black pepper. To peel the papaya, either use a melon baller to carve out the flesh or a knife to cut off the peel. Place your thumb on the peel to make your grip stable and cut into smaller cubes.

**Summary:** Healthy nutrition involves preparing and eating a variety of foods. Members will learn fun nutrition facts about pineapple and papayas as well as how to safely cut those fruits. Members will also have the opportunity to taste these delicious fruits.

**What 4-H projects does this activity connect with:** Health, Gardening and Foods

**Snack connection: Serve freshly cut fruit or make Fruit and Cheese Kabobs.**

*Ingredients:*

- Freshly cut pineapple and papaya from demonstration
- Cheese cubes
- Other assorted fresh fruit such as strawberries, watermelon, mangos, honeydew, cantaloupe, grapes, oranges, apples, bananas, etc. cut into pieces

*Directions:* Use wooden skewers to create kabobs.

**Resources:**

<http://www.extension.org/pages/19871/enjoy-more-fruits-and-vegetables>

<http://www.extension.org/pages/19882/safe-foof-handling-of-fruits-and-vegetables>

<http://www.four-h.purdue.edu>