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### Wild Pineapples in Venezuela

Although pineapples, *Ananas ananas* (L.) Cockerell (*A. sativus* Schult. f.) were known to have originated in the American tropics and have been reported growing in the wild state in Brazil, Surinam, and Paraguay (*Pflanzenfam.* (2nd ed.), 1930, p. 154), not until recent observations by the author and V. Badillo in the Parguasa region of the Estado Bolívar, and simultaneously by others in neighboring regions, have they been definitely known to be in the wild state in Venezuela. They grow under a variety of conditions ranging from dense shade under warm, humid forest to edges of forest. There seem to exist several varieties or forms, differing in fruit size and taste and in leaf characters. Among the latter may be mentioned complete absence of thorns in leaves, more so than in the Smooth Cayenne cultivated variety. Others have thorns retrorsely and antrorsely oriented. One such variety differs so little from its relative, *Bromelia Pinguin* L., that only the expert natives (Piaroa Indians) could distinguish them. While only one variety growing wild was found sweet and palatable enough to be desirable, Piaroa Indians have had under cultivation since time immemorial some varieties which yield large, tasty fruits. The wild varieties have abundant seed, one ovary alone having yielded 14. This is in contrast to the present commercial varieties and the sparingly established Pan de Azúcar in P. R., which are largely seedless. Samples of all of these have been brought to the Institute of Tropical Agriculture, at Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, to be used for breeding purposes if they survive there.

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