June 9 A Pile of Palpitating Pineapple Palaver and Patter.MP3

Gary Crawford: [00:00:00] In the musical, "Cabaret" takes place in Berlin 1931, you may remember that the fruit vendor, Herr Schultz, tries to woo his love Fraulein Schneider by giving her a pineapple.

[00:00:15] "Music Plays"

Gary Crawford: [00:00:15] And we'll get back to them in a minute. I don't think I have ever been given a pineapple as a love offering.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:21] Neither have I.

Gary Crawford: [00:00:22] But Laura Popielski with the Agriculture Department Marketing Services out here at the Department Farmers Market in Washington giving pineapple samples to everybody here along with some great pineapple information. First though history, pineapples originated in Central and South America not Hawaii.

Gary Crawford: [00:00:37] Christopher Columbus and his crew ran into their first pineapple in 1493 on the island of Guadalupe.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:43] And they said it kind of looks like a pinecone on the outside and they cut it open and they thought it had any texture like an apple. So they decided to mash the two names together and call it a pineapple.

Gary Crawford: [00:00:54] And by the 1600s pineapples in Europe they were a rare and expensive item Weren't they?

Laura Popielski: [00:00:58] Oooh, pineapples were a hot commodity. They were so sought after that people would rent them to show off at their own parties. So you could rent a pineapple.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:09] I'm so poor that I have to rent my groceries.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:10] Aww, I hope they don't repo them.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:13] Oh. Me too. But anyway, luckily today you don't have to ruin pineapples but Laura when we go to buy a whole pineapple at the store Are there tricks to finding a good one.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:22] You really want to pick it up and feel it. It should feel pretty heavy and should feel very firm and should give it a sniff from the bottom. Make sure it smells pretty tropical not over sweet or sour that means it's gone over ripe. And then the leaves themselves should also be fresh looking not dried or whether.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:40] She says you can store a whole pineapple on a shelf for a couple of days or in the fridge either whole or cut for about five days. And besides of course those sugary sweetness in there Laura. What else is in that pineapple?

Laura Popielski: [00:01:51] They're an excellent source of vitamin C. Which is good for your immune system and iron absorption and they also have a lot of fiber in them as well fiber.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:00] Ahhh Fiber! You know what that can do for you.
Laura Popielski: [00:02:01] Yes we do.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:03] That could be a problem for so let's get back to Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz.

[00:02:08] "Music Plays"

Gary Crawford: [00:02:20] Of course. Laura knows lots of ways to use and serve pineapple but since it is summer.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:26] So have you ever grilled pineapple before?

Gary Crawford: [00:02:28] Yes I never did that. How do you do that?

Laura Popielski: [00:02:30] Take pieces long slices sprinkle little cinnamon. And a little bit of olive oil and grill, them up next to all your other grilled veggies and meats and it's going to taste fabulous.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:42] Now quickly back to Fraulein Schneider and Herr Schultz.

[00:02:45] "Music Plays"

Gary Crawford: [00:02:54] Gary Crawford for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington.