

# Egg method of rooting cuttings

Hi Everyone,

I've been a frangipani cutting 'battler' for quite a few years now, and have tried all the newest fancy ideas on getting my cuttings to root only to have them succeed for everyone else, but fail miserably for me regardless of if I do it the exact same way.

I did my first experiment with this method with a 30cm cutting, it was a very special cultivar gifted to me in my last package from Marilyn early last year. This cutting was originally grafted to a seedling base, but over winter the seedling rootstock rotted and died, and the top portion of the plant started to shrivel and was on its way out.

I cleaned up the base of the cutting, let it dry for a week or so, and then planted it with an egg. I was shocked to find roots near the bottom of the bottle it was planted in, in just 10 Days!!

So I thought that I would give a quick rundown on a rooting method that I actually had SUCCESS with!!

The rooting method is simply known as 'The Egg Method' and was recommended by me as the most superior way to root frangipani cuttings by a friend, Darren Reid. This method is pretty much as simple as its name; you place an egg below the cutting!

From the research I've done on this method, there are a few thoughts on what the egg actually does to help. Some say that as the egg begins to break down, it goes through a process known as anaerobic decomposition, and during this process, gases escape from the egg and nourish the cutting.

Others believe that probiotics play a part and raw eggs can encourage the growth of two probiotics, Rodobacter and Rhodopseudomonas purple bacteria. These bacteria are common in soil near plant root systems.

I wonder if these bacteria are the reason you can almost always stick a cutting directly into the ground and have it root no problem, but when using fresh or sterile potting mediums and rooting in bags/pots, there does seem to be a degree of failure? (Although not for a lot of people!!)

Either way, I am not a scientist so can't make any claims on this other than what I have done with my own experiments and tests, and that is all I wish to share.

This is my method:

1. Let your cuttings dry for a week or so after cutting, just so the end has a good chance to heal over. While your cutting is still oozing white sap, dip it in some rooting hormone powder to seal the end.
2. Take a 1.25L coke bottle (or similar) and remove the top.



3. Put 3 or more decent sized drainage holes in the bottom of the bottle to ensure good drainage.
4. Fill the bottle with about 5cm of a good rooting medium. Here I have used 1/3 premium potting mix, 1/3 fine pine bark mulch and 1/3 coarse sand.
5. Place your egg in the bottle on top of this soil mix.



6. Add more soil mix so that you have completely covered the egg with at least 3cm of soil.



7. Place your cutting/s into this mix, and then add more soil mix to about 4cm from the top of the bottle. I try to aim to put the base of the cutting just over the top of the egg. Do this gently so that you do not break the egg. Here I have planted two cuttings per bottle, just to save on materials.



8. Finally, fill the top of the bottle with stones or gravel to hold the cuttings in place. I find that these stones will also hold heat, and keep the soil warm.



9. Just to prevent the bottles from toppling over, I placed all my bottles into a large plant pot, and filled in any gaps with more stones, just to prevent movement. I place the bottles in a position so that they get morning sun, but not baking hot afternoon sun. The morning sun does warm the stones at the top of the bottles, and holds the heat through the day which really does seem to help.



10. The final picture (see right) is of the original cutting I planted with this method, showing how the cutting has sent out new roots. These roots are only about 10 days since planting!



I hope that this gives you a general idea on how the egg method has worked for me, and if you do have some trouble with rooting cuttings in the future, I recommend giving this method a try.

Phil