

CANTALoupES AS A CROP IN MERCED COUNTY

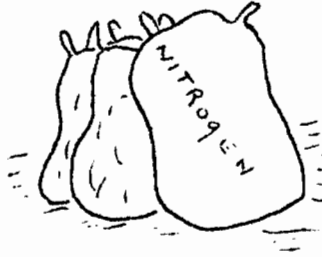
By

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Merced County Farm AdvisorSOILS

Sandy or loamy soils are best for cantaloupes. Soils infested with nematodes or wireworms should be avoided.

FERTILIZERS

Nitrogenous fertilizers are the most common fertilizers used. From 50 to 75 pounds of actual nitrogen are recommended.



The application of about 25 pounds of this nitrogen applied at about the time the vines begin to run is very worthwhile.

CULTURAL PRACTICES

Planting takes place from late March to mid-April. Seed is planted on the flat in rows about 6 feet apart. Plants are thinned to about 18 inches to two feet in the row. Two or three cultivations are given the crop before the vines spread too far to make cultivation impossible. Normally about three irrigations are given the crop besides the pre-irrigation.

VARIETIES

Powdery Mildew Resistant No. 45 is the main variety grown. It is resistant to only one form of mildew.

INSECTS AND DISEASES

One or more of the following insects and diseases may be encountered:

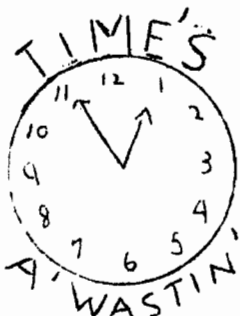
Insects: - Cutworms, wireworms, nematodes, melon aphids, cucumber beetles, flea beetles and red spiders.

DISEASES:- Powdery mildew, downy mildew, verticillium wilt, root rot, damping off, mosaic and curly top.

For control of specific insects or diseases see the local Farm Advisor:

HARVESTING, GRADING AND PACKING

During the peak harvest periods it is the common practice to go over the fields every third day. Picking should be completed by 10 or 11 a.m. Melons harvested early are cool and turgid. Logically, fruit harvested while cool and promptly placed in refrigerator cars may be expected to surpass in quality fruit not so handled.



January, 1954

PRELIMINARY COST STUDY

WHAT WILL IT COST TO GROW CANTALOUPE IN MERCED COUNTY BASED ON A YIELD OF 175 EIGHTY POUND CRATES. MAN LABOR AT \$1.00 PER HR.; 2 PLOW TRACTOR AT \$1.25 PER HR.; 4 PLOW TRACKLAYER AT \$2.75 PER HR.

	<u>Sample Costs</u>		<u>My Costs</u>	
	<u>Per</u>	<u>Per</u>	<u>Per</u>	<u>Per</u>
	<u>Acre</u>	<u>Crate</u>	<u>Acre</u>	<u>Crate</u>
<u>PRE-HARVEST LABOR & MATERIAL COST:</u>				
Land Preparation: plow, disc, etc. 3 hrs. man and heavy tractor	\$	11.25		
Plant: 2 men and light tractor $\frac{1}{2}$ hour		1.63		
Seed:		3.75		
Fertilize: 2 times - 2 hrs. man & light tractor		4.50		
Fertilizer: 100 lbs. N. @ 15¢		15.00		
Thin, hoe & weed: 7 man hrs.		7.00		
Cultivate & furrow: 3 hrs. man & light tractor		6.75		
Irrigate: 3 times - 6 man hours		6.00		
Water: (power for pumping)		10.00		
Dusting: 3 times - plane @ 4¢ per pound		3.60		
Dust: 90 lbs. @ 7¢ (5% DDT)		6.30		
Miscellaneous labor & material		8.00		
Total pre-harvest labor & material cost	\$	83.78	\$0.48	
<u>HARVESTING COSTS:</u>				
Picking & loading: @ 28¢ per crate	\$	49.00		
Hauling to shed: @ 11¢ per crate		19.25		
Shed Costs: pack & load @ \$1.40 per crate		245.00		
Total harvesting cost	\$	313.25	\$1.79	
<u>CASH OVERHEAD COSTS:</u>				
General expense (5% of above except shed costs)	\$	7.78		
County taxes		4.50		
Repairs, insurance, miscellaneous cash costs		5.00		
Total cash overhead cost	\$	17.28	\$.10	
TOTAL CASH, LABOR & FIELD POWER COSTS	\$	414.31	2.37	
<u>DEPRECIATION COSTS:</u>				
Irrigation facilities: \$80 original cost	\$	5.00		
Equipment, except tractor: \$25 cost		2.50		
Total depreciation cost	\$	7.50	\$.04	
<u>INTEREST ON INVESTMENT @ 5%:</u>				
Irrigation facilities & equipment on one-half of original cost (\$52.50)	\$	2.63		
Land at \$400		20.00		
Total interest on investment cost	\$	22.63	\$.13	
TOTAL COST OF PRODUCTION	\$	444.44	\$2.54	