

cantaloupes

sample costs

and

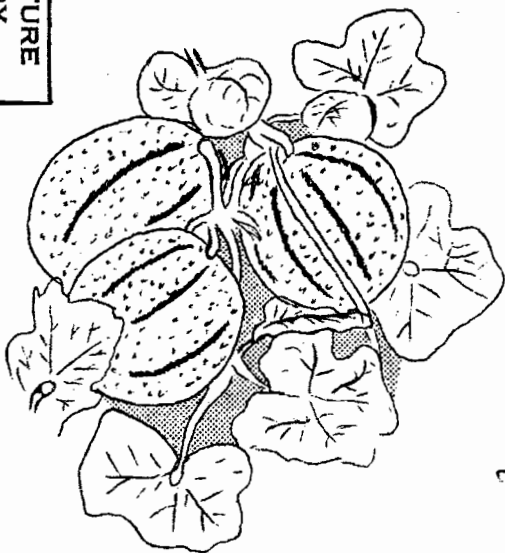
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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
BERKELEY



*Canta Loupes*

University of California  
Agricultural Extension Service  
Imperial County  
Court House, El Centro

Cost Data Sheet No. 12

UC Cooperative Extension

SPRING CANTALOUPE--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$2.00 per hour (\$1.50 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, transportation, supervision and fringe benefits).

Yield - 160 crates per acre.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
<b>LAND PREPARATION</b>						
Flow or subsoil	\$ 8.00					\$ 8.00
Disc 2x	2.00					4.00
Border & break border	1.00					1.00
Flood		water .75 ac. ft.	1.73	1	2.00	3.73
Fertilize	1.00	400# 11-48-0	19.00			20.00
Border disc	5.00					5.00
<b>TOTAL LAND PREPARATION</b>						<b>41.73</b>
<b>GROWING PERIOD</b>						
Plant & shape beds	3.00	seed 2# @ 2.25	4.50			7.50
Pollination		hives 1.5 @ 6.00				6.00
Thin				10	20.00	20.00
Turn vines 3x				20	40.00	40.00
Cultivate 3x	3.00					9.00
Fertilize - side-dress 2x	2.00	150# N @ 10¢	15.00			19.00
Hoe 2x				15	30.00	30.00
Irrigate 6x		water 3 ac. ft. @ 2.30	6.90	3	6.00	12.90
Pest control 6x	2.50	pesticides, fungicides	18.00			33.00
<b>TOTAL GROWING PERIOD</b>						<b>177.40</b>
<b>TOTAL PRE-HARVEST COSTS</b>						<b>219.13</b>
<b>HARVEST</b>						
Pick, haul, pack, & crate 160 crates @ 2.60						416.00
<b>TOTAL HARVEST COST</b>						<b>416.00</b>
Land rent						65.00
Cash overhead 15% of preharvest and land rent costs, plus 2% of harvest costs						50.94
<b>TOTAL ALL COSTS</b>						<b>\$ 751.07</b>

Cost per crate = \$4.69
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The Agricultural Commissioner's reports show seasonal average price per ton during the past five years varied from a low of \$122.96 in 1966 to a high of \$134.19 in 1963.

YIELDS

From 100 to 200 crates per acre are harvested. Average yields are about 140-160 crates.

PLANTING DATES

Plantings to be capped are seeded from mid-December to February. Open melons are planted from February through mid-March. The fall crop is generally planted during the first two weeks in August for harvest in October and early November.

VARIETIES

Nearly all of the acreage is now planted to Topmark. Some Campo and PMR 45 are also grown.

## SOILS

Well drained soils relatively free from nematodes are used. Fumigation is practiced where nematodes may be a problem. Sandy or silt loams are sometimes selected for the earliest crop. Heavier soils are preferred for most of the acreage because of their greater water holding capacity, slowing the onset of vine collapse in summer.

## IRRIGATION

After planting, the beds are subbed past the seed line. Following emergence, water is often withheld until flowering. This is done to maintain soil warmth and promote early production. When harvesting begins, water is applied by quick, light irrigations. During the time, excessive moisture may increase ground spotting, rotted and soft fruit.

## FERTILIZERS

400 pounds of 11-48-0 are often applied before listing. Up to 150 pounds of nitrogen are later sidedressed in split applications. Fall cantaloupes have been successfully grown

with as little as 60 pounds of nitrogen and 40 pounds  $P_{205}$  injected prior to planting, and sidedressed with 200 pounds of 10-10-10 when runners begin to appear.

## POLLINATION

One hive per acre is required with an average of 1.5 hives being common practice. The bees should be distributed on at least two sides of a 40 acre field.

## PESTS AND DISEASES

Cantaloupes are subject to a number of problems including nematodes, cutworms, aphids, mites, loopers, leafhoppers, leafminers, ground beetles, crickets, virus mosaic, mildew and crown blight. Consult your farm advisor for pest control recommendations.

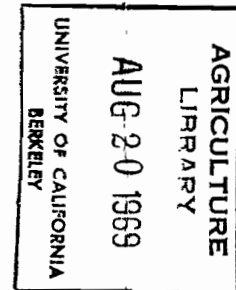
## HARVESTING

Spring melons are harvested from May to July. Fall cantaloupes are harvested in October and November. The fruit are picked at the full slip stage. After hauling to a shed, they are sorted and graded in wood crates holding 23, 27, 36, 45 or 54 melons.

NOTE: If fumigated, add \$3.00 application fee and \$9.00 fumigant. If petroleum mulched,

add \$3.00 application fee and \$13.00 material cost.

If capped, add \$37.36 for caps, splints and \$190.00 labor. Costs for fall cantaloupes will be somewhat lower due to reduced fertilizer and fungicide requirements, and short growing season.



Prepared by  
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