

MIXED MELONS PROJECTED COSTS 1987-1988

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$5.50 per hour (\$4.30 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, transportation, supervision and fringe benefits).

Field--600 cartons per acre 85-90 days to maturity Example --- Honeydews (Fall planted)

OPERATION	CUSTOM RATE	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR		COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
LAND PREPARATION						
Stubble disc	17.75					17.75
Subsoil	27.00					27.00
Disc 1x	9.00					9.00
Landplane 2x	9.50					19.00
Border, cross check & break borders	15.00					15.00
Flood		Water 1/2 ac/ft	4.50	1	5.50	10.00
Fertilize	4.00	300# 11-52-0	35.00			39.00
Disc 1x	9.00					9.00
Triplane	8.50					8.50
List flat beds	10.50					10.50
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION COSTS						164.75
GROWING PERIOD						
Plant & shape	10.00	Seed 1 1/2# @ 9.75/#	14.63			24.63
Thin				5	27.50	27.50
Cultivate and reshape 2x	16.00					32.00
Fertilize & furrow out 1x	10.00	60# N @ .30	18.00			28.00
Pollination		Hives 1 1/2 @ 18.00	27.00			27.00
Hand weed 1x				6	33.00	33.00
Irrigate 3x		Water 2 ac/ft	18.00	8	44.00	62.00
Water run fertilizer		60# N @ .30	18.00			18.00
Insect Control 3x	4.50	Insecticides	32.00			45.50
Disease Control 2x	4.90	Fungicides	14.00			23.80
Disc out beds	9.00					9.00
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						330.43
GROWING PERIOD & LAND PREPARATION COSTS						495.18
Land Rent (net acres)						150.00
Cash Overhead-----		12% of Preharvest costs & land rent				77.42
TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS						722.60
HARVEST						
Custom harvest:						
Pick, pack, and haul		600 cartons @	2.65	per 30# carton		1590.00
TOTAL ALL COSTS						2312.60

PROJECTED INCOME ABOVE COSTS (PER ACRE)
price/carton

Cartons per acre	price/carton					Breakeven \$/carton
	3.50	4.00	4.50	5.00	5.50	
500	-298	-48	202	452	702	4.10
600	-213	87	387	687	987	3.85
700	-128	222	572	922	1272	3.68
800	-43	357	757	1157	1557	3.55
900	42	492	942	1392	1842	3.45

MIXED MELON CULTURE

1987-1988

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>HONEYDEWS</u>		<u>VALUE/ACRE</u>
		<u>YIELD/ACRE (CARTONS)</u>		
1986	3567	292		\$1340
1985	2939	394		2504
1984	2625	425		3150
1983	2769	459		1884

MISCELLANEOUS MELONS

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>YIELD/ACRE (CARTONS)</u>	<u>VALUE/ACRE</u>
1986	760	368	\$1760
1985	1563	215	1371
1984	1265	305	2266
1983	990	341	2756

PLANTING DATES: Mixed melons are planted in July and early August for harvest starting in October until frost. A small acreage may also be planted in the spring.

YIELD: The term "mixed melons" includes the following muskmelons: honeydew, crenshaw, casaba, juan canari, santa claus, and persian. The greatest acreage is sown to honeydews and crenshaws. Yields vary with season, disease incidence and kind of melon. There are potentially 1200-1300 cartons per acre, but most often yields are half that amount. Some years, the average yield is only 300-500 cartons per acre due to infectious yellows virus.

VARIETIES AND PLANTING: The standard honeydew varieties are "Green Flesh Honeydew", "Orange Flesh Honeydew" and "Hybrid Honeydew". "White Crenshaw" is becoming more popular than "Green Skinned Crenshaw" due to sunburn resistance. White crenshaw has a pale yellow skin and salmon colored flesh.

Melon seed is sown in single rows down the middle of alternate 42 inch N-S beds. The seed is planted about 1/2 inch deep. After emergence the plants are thinned from 6-12 inches apart depending upon planting date and melon type.

Later in the season the non-planted offbeds are split and the soil is moved to form 80 inch wide beds. Cultivation of weeds and sidedress fertilization are accomplished during this phase of culture.

FERTILIZERS: Three hundred pounds of 11-52-0 may be applied prior to listing (as needed). Sixty to eighty pounds of nitrogen are sidedressed in a single application. Fall melons tend to grow larger in size than the spring planted crop. Size is controlled by spacing, fertilization and irrigation stress.

POLLINATION: One to 1 1/2 bee colonies per acre are recommended. The bees should be distributed on at least two sides per 40 acres.

PEST CONTROL: Most growers use only mechanical cultivation and hand hoeing for weed control. Insect pests include: crickets, ground beetles, cutworms, loopers, armyworms, leafminers and aphids. Diseases include: powdery mildew, downy mildew, lettuce infectious yellows virus, charcoal rot and sudden wilt. Consult your farm advisor for the latest pest control recommendations.

HARVESTING: Mixed melons are usually field packed, or picked and hauled to the edge of the field to small temporary packing sheds. The melons are packed into cardboard cartons containing a divider partition. There are 5, 6 or 8 melons per 30 pound carton. The cartons are forced air cooled prior to shipping. Cooling and palletizing are paid by the receiver.