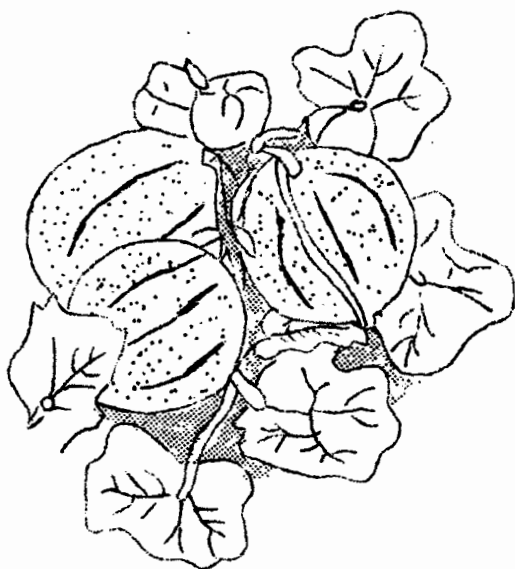


cantaloupes (fall)
sample costs
and
production



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

Cost Data Sheet No. 7

UC Cooperative Extension

FALL CANTALOUPE--PROJECTED PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$3.75 per hour (\$3.00 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, transportation, supervision and fringe benefits).

Yield - 175 crates per acre (7 tons). 85-90 days to maturity.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR*		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
LAND PREPARATION						
Subsoil	\$ 12.50					\$ 12.50
Disc 2x	4.50					9.00
Border & break border	4.50					4.50
Flood		Water .75 ac ft	2.63	1	3.75*	6.38
Fertilize	3.00	200# 11-48-0	20.00			23.00
Disc 2x	4.50					9.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						\$ 64.38
GROWING PERIOD						
Run Flat Beds	5.50					5.50
Plant	4.50	Seed 1 1/2# @ 5.00/#	7.50			12.00
Pollination		Hives 1.5 @10.00	15.00			15.00
Thin				4	15.00	15.00
Cultivate 2x	3.50					7.00
Fertilize - side - dress 1x	4.50	60# N @ 25¢	15.00			19.50
Weed 1x				4	15.00	15.00
Sprinkler Irrigate		Rent	35.00	9	33.75*	68.75
Irrigate 3x		Water 2 ac ft	7.00	8	30.00*	37.00
Pest Control 2x	3.00	Pesticides, Fungicides	15.0			21.00
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						\$ 215.75
GROWING PERIOD & LAND PREP COSTS						\$ 280.13
Land Rent						120.00
Cash Overhead - 12% of preharvest costs and land rent						48.02
TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS						\$ 448.15
HARVEST						
Pick, haul, pack & crate 175 crates @ 4.75						\$ 831.25
TOTAL ALL COSTS						\$ 1279.40

Cost per crate = \$7.31

*Includes shovel labor, pipe setting and miscellaneous tractor work.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>YIELD/ACRE (TONS)</u>	<u>VALUE/TON</u>
1970	9900	5.80	\$ 180.92
1971	10500	5.66	180.67
1972	12600	6.00	142.67
1973	9500	6.95	189.45
1974	8300	7.53	221.95

Combined Spring and Fall crop.

PLANTING DATES: The fall crop is generally planted during the last two weeks of July through the first two weeks in August for harvest in mid-October and November. The melons are planted on flat beds to reduce sun exposure.

VARIETIES: Nearly all of the acreage is planted to Topmark. The remainder of the acreage is PMR 45.

SOILS: Well-drained soils are preferred. Sandy or silt loams are sometimes selected for the earliest crop.

IRRIGATION

After planting, the beds are subbed past the seed line. Fall crops may be sprinkler irrigated. The last irrigation is scheduled about one week prior to harvest. During this time, excessive moisture may increase ground spotting, rotted and soft fruits.

FERTILIZERS

200 pounds of 11-48-0 may be applied before listing (if needed). Sixty pounds of nitrogen are sidedressed in one sidedress application. Fall melons tend to grow larger than the spring planted crop. Size is controlled by spacing, nitrogen and irrigation practice.

POLLINATION

One bee hive per acre is required. Some growers use 1 1/2 hives per acre. The bees should be distributed on at least two sides of a 40 acre field.

PESTS AND DISEASES

Fall cantaloupes are subject to fewer pest problems than spring melons. Nematodes, cutworms, aphids, mites, loopers, leaf-

hoppers, leafminers, ground beetles, crickets, mosaic virus and mildew may be problems. Consult your Farm Advisor for pest control recommendations.

HARVESTING

Fall cantaloupes are hand 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. Some 2/3 crate cartons are being used instead of the standard wood crate. The crates are then hydrocooled or forced-air cooled prior to shipment.

SPECIAL PRACTICES

Root knot nematodes can cause serious damage to melons if not controlled by soil fumigation. The normal charges for fumigation are \$4.50 for application and \$28.00 for material.

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