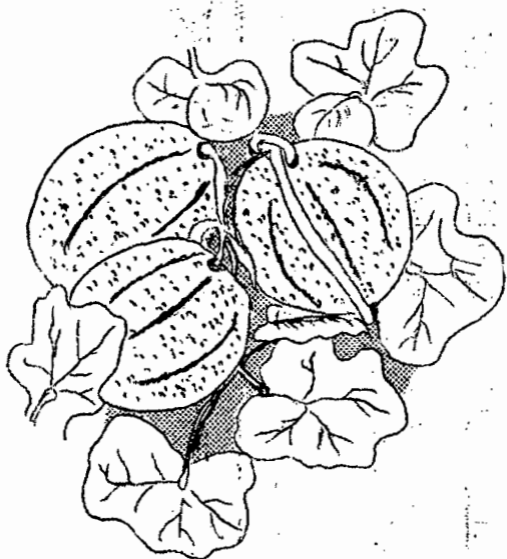


# cantaloupes (spring)

sample costs

and

production



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

SPRING CANTALOUPE--SAMPLE PRODUCTION COSTS

Mechanical operations at custom rates. Hand labor at \$3.00 per hour (\$2.40 plus Social Security, unemployment insurance, transportation, supervision and fringe benefits).

Yield - 160 crates per acre (6.4 tons). 85-90 days to maturity.

| OPERATION                     | Custom Rate | MATERIALS       |       | HAND LABOR |         | SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|------------|---------|-----------------------|
|                               |             | Type            | Cost  | Hours      | Dollars |                       |
| <b>LAND PREPARATION</b>       |             |                 |       |            |         |                       |
| Plow or subsoil               | 10.00       |                 |       |            |         | \$ 10.00              |
| Disc 2x                       | 3.50        |                 |       |            |         | 7.00                  |
| Border & break border         | 3.50        |                 |       |            |         | 3.50                  |
| Flood                         |             | water .75 ac ft | 1.73  | 1          | 3.00    | 4.73                  |
| Fertilize                     | 1.75        | 400# 11-48-0    | 24.00 |            |         | 25.75                 |
| Border disc                   | 6.00        |                 |       |            |         | 6.00                  |
| <b>TOTAL LAND PREPARATION</b> |             |                 |       |            |         | <b>\$ 56.98</b>       |

|                                              |      |                           |       |    |       |                 |
|----------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------|-------|----|-------|-----------------|
| <b>GROWING PERIOD</b>                        |      |                           |       |    |       |                 |
| Plant & shape beds                           | 3.50 | seed 2# @ 3.00            | 6.00  |    |       | 9.50            |
| Reshape beds 4x                              | 3.00 |                           |       |    |       | 12.00           |
| Petroleum mulch                              | 3.50 |                           | 16.00 |    |       | 19.50           |
| Pollination                                  |      | hives 1.5 @ 10.00         | 15.00 |    |       | 15.00           |
| Thin                                         |      |                           |       | 14 | 12.00 | 12.00           |
| Cultivate 2x                                 | 3.50 |                           |       |    |       | 7.00            |
| Fertilize - side-dress 1x                    | 3.50 | 100# N @15¢               | 15.00 |    |       | 18.50           |
| Hoe 1x                                       |      |                           |       | 4  | 12.00 | 12.00           |
| Irrigate 5x                                  |      | water 3 ac ft<br>2.30     | 6.90  | 5  | 15.00 | 21.90           |
| Pest Control 4x                              | 2.00 | pesticides,<br>fungicides | 18.00 |    |       | 26.00           |
| <b>TOTAL GROWING PERIOD</b>                  |      |                           |       |    |       | <b>\$153.40</b> |
| <b>GROWING PERIOD &amp; LAND PREP. COSTS</b> |      |                           |       |    |       | <b>\$210.38</b> |

|                                                       |  |  |  |  |  |                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------|
| Land Rent                                             |  |  |  |  |  | 90.00           |
| Cash Overhead - 10% of preharvest costs and land rent |  |  |  |  |  | 30.04           |
| <b>TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS</b>                         |  |  |  |  |  | <b>\$330.42</b> |

|                                           |  |  |  |  |  |                 |
|-------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------|
| <b>HARVEST</b>                            |  |  |  |  |  |                 |
| Pick, haul, pack & crate 160 crates @3.80 |  |  |  |  |  | \$608.00        |
| <b>TOTAL ALL COSTS</b>                    |  |  |  |  |  | <b>\$938.42</b> |

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| Cost per crate = \$5.86 |
|-------------------------|

**YIELDS**

From 100 to 200 crates per acre are harvested. Average yields are about 140-160 crates. The Agricultural Commissioner's reports show seasonal average price per ton during the past five years varied from a low of \$121.22 in 1968 to a high of \$180.00 in 1970.

**PLANTING DATES**

Plantings to be copped are seeded from mid-December through January. Open melons are planted from mid-January through mid-March.

**VARIETIES**

Nearly all of the acreage is planted to Topmark.

**SOILS**

Well drained soils are preferred. 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 which slows the onset of vine collapse in summer.

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 this 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 addressed.

### POLLINATION

At least one hive of bees per acre is recommended and 1 1/2 hives are better. The bees should be distributed 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, mosaic virus and mildew. Consult your Farm Advisor for pest control recommendations.



## HARVESTING

Spring melons are harvested from May to July. The fruit are picked at or before 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 1/2 and 2/3 crate cartons are being used instead of the standard wooden crate.

## SPECIAL PRACTICES

If fumigated, add \$3.75 application fee and \$20.25 for fumigant. If petroleum mulched, add \$3.50 application fee and/or \$16.00 material cost.

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