

FALL CANTALOUPE 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--350 cartons per acre 85-90 days to maturity Topmark variety

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	35.25			39.25
Disc 2x	9.00					18.00
Triplane	9.50					9.50
List flat beds	9.25					9.25
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION COSTS						156.00
GROWING PERIOD						
Plant & shape Thin	10.00	Seed 1 1/2# @ 6.25	9.38	5	27.50	19.38
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 4x	4.50	Insecticides	32.50			50.50
Disease Control 2x	4.90	Fungicides	14.50			24.30
Disc out beds	9.00					9.00
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						330.68
GROWING PERIOD & LAND PREPARATION COSTS						486.68
Land Rent (net acres)						150.00
Cash Overhead-----		12% of Preharvest costs & land rent				76.40
TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS						713.08
HARVEST (Field pack)						
Pick, haul and pack		350 cartons @	3.00	per carton		1050.00
TOTAL ALL COSTS						1763.08

PROJECTED INCOME ABOVE COSTS (PER ACRE)
price/carton

Cartons per acre	price/carton					Breakeven \$/carton
	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	
300	-413	-113	187	487	787	5.38
350	-363	-13	337	687	1037	5.04
400	-313	87	487	887	1287	4.78
450	-263	187	637	1087	1537	4.58
500	-213	287	787	1287	1787	4.43

FALL CANTALOUPE CULTURE

1987-1988

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>YIELD/ACRE (CARTONS)</u>	<u>VALUE/ACRE</u>
1986	10350	183	\$ 944
1985	7243	266	1413
1984	4536	430	2324
1983	19240*	310*	1990*
1982	12828*	410*	2575*

*Spring and fall acres combined

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 until frost. The melons are planted on flat beds to minimize excessive heat to the seedlines.

VARIETIES: "Topmark" is a popular open pollinated variety. "Topscore" and "Easyrider" hybrids are sulfur resistant; "PMR 45", occasionally used, will not tolerate sulfur.

SOILS: Well-drained medium-textured soils are preferred. Fall melons are planted on alternate N-S forty-inch beds. Later in the season, the beds are widened to 80 inches by splitting the off-beds.

IRRIGATION: After planting, the beds are subbed past the seedline. Sprinkler irrigation is occasionally used to germinate the crop at a cost of \$130/acre. The last irrigation is scheduled about one week prior to harvest. During this time, excessive moisture may increase ground spotting, rotted and soft fruit.

FERTILIZERS: Three hundred pounds of 11-52-0 may be applied before listing (as needed). Sixty to eighty pounds of nitrogen are sidedressed in one application. Fall melons tend to grow larger than the spring planted crop. Size is controlled by spacing, nitrogen fertilizer and irrigation practice. Some growers apply the preplant fertilizer as liquid ammonium phosphate (10-34-0) or phosphoric acid (0-52-0) injected next to the seedlines.

POLLINATION: At least one bee hive per acre is recommended. Some growers use 1 1/2 hives per acre. The bees should be distributed on at least two sides of a 40 acre field.

PEST CONTROL: Most growers rely solely on cultivation and hoeing for weed control.

Fall cantaloupes are subject to fewer insect problems than spring melons. Nematodes, cutworms, aphids, mites, loopers, leafhoppers, leafminers, ground beetles, crickets, infectious yellows, fusarium fruit rot, sudden wilt and powdery mildew may be problems. Consult your farm advisor for pest control information.

HARVESTING: Fall cantaloupes are hand harvested in October and November. The fruit are picked at the full slip stage. Field packing is the standard practice. Melons are sorted and graded into cartons holding 9, 12, 18, or 23 melons. The crates are forced-air cooled prior to shipment. Cooling and palletizing are paid by the receiver.