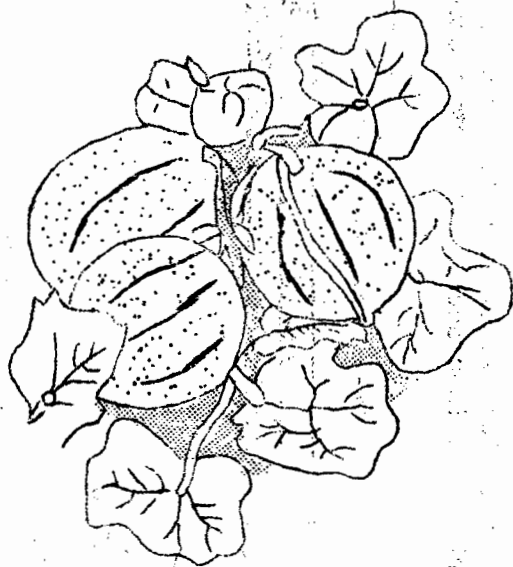


cantaloupes (fall)

sample costs
and
production



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

Cost Data Sheet No. 7

FALL CANTALOUPE--PROJECTED COSTS--1982-1983

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

Yield--350 cartons per acre. 85-90 days to maturity.

OPERATION	Custom Rate	MATERIALS		HAND LABOR*		SAMPLE COSTS Per Acre
		Type	Cost	Hours	Dollars	
LAND PREPARATION						
Subsoil	24.00					\$ 24.00
Disc 2x	8.00					16.00
Border, cross check & break borders	12.00					12.00
Flood		Water $\frac{3}{4}$ ac/ft	5.63	1	5.50	11.13
Fertilize	4.00	200# 11-48-0	26.00			30.00
Disc 2x	8.00					16.00
TOTAL LAND PREPARATION						\$ 109.13

GROWING PERIOD

Run flat beds	10.00					\$ 10.00
Plant, shape and apply herbicide	14.00	Seed 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ # @ 6.00 (Prefar®)	9.00 18.00			41.00
Thin				5	27.50	27.50
Cultivate and reshape 2x	14.00					28.00
Fertilize & furrow out 1x	10.00	60# N @ 34¢	20.63			30.63
Pollination		Hives 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ @ 18.50	27.75			27.75
Weed 1x				4	22.00	22.00
Irrigate 3x		Water 2 ac/ft	15.00	8	44.00	59.00
Pest Control 3x	4.00	Pesticides, fungicides	35.00			47.00
Split beds	10.00					10.00
TOTAL GROWING PERIOD						\$ 302.88

GROWING PERIOD & LAND PREPARATION COSTS

\$ 412.01

Land Rent (net acres)

175.00

Cash Overhead--12% of preharvest costs & land rent

70.44

TOTAL PREHARVEST COSTS

\$ 657.45

HARVEST

Pick, haul, pack, cool & sell 350 cartons @ \$3.25 per carton

\$1137.50

TOTAL ALL COSTS

\$1794.95

Cost per crate = \$5.12 @ 350 cartons/ac
Cost per crate = \$4.89 @ 400 cartons/ac

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

YEAR	ACRES*	YIELD/ACRE (TONS)	VALUE/TON
1977	9440	6.6	\$ 214
1978	12370	8.8	207
1979	9788	6.8	266
1980	11812	5.4	304
1981	13967	5.1	378

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. New hybrids like Topscore are being tried on a small scale. Topmark and Topscore are sulfur resistant; PMR 45 is not.

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

* Spring and Fall acres combined.

IRRIGATION

Sprinkler irrigation may be used to germinate the crop at a cost of \$120/acre. After planting, the beds are subbed past the seed line. 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

Two hundred pounds of 11-48-0 may be applied before listing (if needed). Sixty 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 fertility 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

One bee hive per acre is recommended. Some growers use 1½ hives per acre. The bees should be distributed on at least two sides of a 40 acre field.

WEED CONTROL

Some growers rely solely on cultivation for weed control. Those who use herbicides may also use Alanap® (\$11/A.) along with Prefar®.

PESTS AND DISEASES

Fall cantaloupes are subject to fewer insect pest problems than spring melons. Nematodes, cutworms, aphids, mites, loopers, leafhoppers, leafminers, ground beetles, crickets, mosaic virus and powdery mildew may be problems. Whitefly vectored virus diseases were bad in 1981 and may repeat in 1982. 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. After hauling to a shed, they are sorted and graded into cartons holding 9, 12, 18, or 23 melons. The crates are forced-air cooled prior to shipment.

Cartons Per Acre	INCOME ABOVE ALL COSTS PER ACRE							
	Price Per Carton							
300	\$5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	9.00			
	-132	+168	+468	+768	+1068			
350	-45	+305	+655	+1005	+1355			
400	+43	+443	+843	+1243	+1643			
450	+140	+590	+1040	+1490	+1940			
500	+218	+718	+1218	+1718	+2218			

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To simplify our information, it is sometimes necessary to use trade names of products or equipment. No endorsement of named products is intended nor is criticism implied of similar products which are not mentioned.

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