

Muskmelon - 0.5 Kg Seeds



Cantaloupe (also cantelope, cantaloup, muskmelon (India and the United States), mushmelon, rockmelon, sweet melon, honeydew, Persian melon, or spanspek (South Africa)) refers to a variety of Cucumis melo, a species in the family Cucurbitaceae.

Rating: Not Rated Yet

Price

Sales price R 1,946

Discount

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Description Melons are members of the cucurbit family, which includes pumpkins, zucchini, cucumbers, summer squash and winter squash. Being closely related, melons have similar growth requirements, however they will not cross-pollinate with cucumbers, squash or pumpkins.

Melon quality is a function of the sugar content of the fruit. High sugar content is achieved by avoiding all stress during the growing season. Stress comes from foliar diseases, insect pests, weeds, poor nutrition, and excesses or lack of water.

Common name: Muskmelon, Cantaloupe, Netted melon

Height: a few inches to more than 12 inches tall

Difficulty level: Easy

Planting & Care

Melons prefer hot, sunny locations with fertile, well drained soils, and can be either transplanted or direct seeded. Transplanting can add 2 to 4 weeks to the growing season, but melons are particularly sensitive to root disturbance and growth will be retarded if transplants are not properly managed.

Sunlight: Full sun Full Sun

Soil: Muskmelons grow best on well-drained, sandy loam soils with a pH level between 6.0 and 6.5. Soils with a pH less than 6.0 will produce plants with yellowed foliage and fewer perfect flowers. If drainage is a problem, plant in 6 to 8 inch high beds.

Water: Water deeply and infrequently, 1-2 inches per week. Use drip irrigation if possible. Mulch around the plant will conserve soil moisture and reduce weed growth.

Fertilizer: Plow or till well-rotted manure and fertilizer into the soil before planting. If you use manure or compost, additional fertilizer applications may be reduced or eliminated, depending on how much organic matter you apply. Do not use "Weed and Feed" type fertilizers on vegetables. They contain weed killers that will kill vegetable plants.

Harvesting: Cantaloupe requires 35-45 days to mature from flowering, depending on the temperature. As the fruit matures the skin surface netting gets coarse and rough, the background color of the fruit turns from green to yellow, the surface color becomes dull, and the tendrils near the fruit (which look like curly strings) on the stem dry and turn brown. Harvest the fruits by twisting the fruit at which point it will separate from the vine. Do not wait for the melons to separate from the vine on their own. At full maturity and peak flavor the stem breaks (slips) away from the vine easily. This stage is called "full slip." Commercial melons are harvested at "1/2 to 3/4 slip" to reduce shipping damage. This removes the

fruit before it has reached maximum sugar content, and sugar content will not increase after harvest. This opportunity to harvest at maximum ripeness is one of the advantages of growing your own melons. Pick melons as they ripen as they will not all ripen at the same time. Cantaloupe will store for 1-2 weeks if held at 45-50°F. Identifying ripe watermelon and honeydew melons is more difficult as most of these fruit types do not slip from the vine. Use a combination of indicators to determine ripeness. Look for (1). tendrils near the fruit stem to become brown and dry; (2) the fruit surface to become rough to the touch and the fruit color to become dull; (3) the bottom of the watermelon (where it lies on the soil) to change from a light green to a yellowish color. Assuring ripe honeydew melons can be achieved by placing the melon in a bag with ripening apples or tomatoes. The latter will release ethylene gas which will complete the ripening process. Select melon varieties that will ripen under your conditions. Short season types ripen between 65 and 75 days. Full season types ripen around 85 days.

Care:

- Mulches Plastic mulch warms the soil, conserves water, helps to control weeds, allows earlier planting and maturity, and reduces ground rot of the fruit.
- The use of transplants with plastic mulch generally results in harvests that begin 7 to 14 days earlier as compared to growing melons on bare ground.
- To get the benefits of plastic mulch, proper installation is critical.
- First lay drip irrigation or a soaker hose on the soil.
- Be sure to offset the drip tape 2 to 3 inches from the center of the bed.
- Further maximize the benefits of plastic mulch by installing it over raised beds.
- Lay the plastic mulch during the hottest part of the day and make sure that the mulch is stretched tight over the soil without any wrinkles.
- Lay the plastic, secure the edges with soil on each side of the raised bed, and cut holes for the seeds or transplants.
- When using plastic mulches and row covers, seeds or plants can be set out about 2 weeks before the last frost date.
- Organic mulches like woodchips or straw can also be used when growing melons, but do not apply organic mulches until soils are warmer than 75°F.
- Controlling weeds Frequent, shallow cultivation will kill weeds before they become a problem.
- The roots of melons are close to the surface of the soil, so it is important not to cultivate too deeply or too close to the plants.
- Cultivate just deeply enough to cut the weeds off below the surface of the soil.
- Continue cultivating as long as you can do so without injuring the vines, usually when the vines begin to spread between the rows.
- When cultivation is no longer possible, pull large weeds by hand.

Use

Culinary use:

- This fruit is excellent for cooling down during the summer heat.
- It is also extremely filling and refreshing.
- Muskmelon has a high level of nutrition, which contributes to many health benefits.
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- The fruit contains minerals like potassium, sodium and magnesium and vitamin A, B and C.
- It is free from cholesterol and is considered to be good for blood cholesterol patients.
- It is also an excellent source of the antioxidant vitamin C.
- Vitamin C is very effective in preventing cancer and heart disease, and consuming it on a regular basis prevents the arteries from hardening.
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- Beta-carotene is also present in a musk melon.
- The potassium present in musk melons help in preventing the risk of strokes and in controlling blood pressure.
- Other health benefits of musk melon include treating the lack of appetite, urinary tract infections, ulcers, acidity and preventing the formation of kidney stones.

Reference:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/fruit/growing-melons-in-minnesota-home-gardens/> <http://www.diethealthclub.com/health-food/musk-melon.html>