

South Carolina



Farm to



School

Palmetto Pick of the Month WATERMELON

JULY



DESCRIPTION

Watermelons are round fruits, related to other melons such as cantaloupe and honey dew. They are also related to cucumbers and like these fruits, grow on vines. Watermelons are 92% water, which is where they get their name. Their seeds prefer warm soil so they are the perfect fruit to grow in South Carolina.

PREPARING

Watermelons can be stored uncut for up to 10 days. Once you are ready to eat the watermelon, cut the melon in half and then slice into the preferred size. Once cut, they can be stored in the refrigerator for 4 days.

GROWING WATERMELON

Sun Exposure: Full Sun

Soil Type : Sandy

Soil pH: Slightly Acidic

Start the seeds indoors in pots with 2-3 seeds per pot. Watermelons grow best in raised rows or mounds for drainage. Transfer the plants in these rows or mounds about 2 feet apart. It might be a good idea to place bags or covers over the plants to keep the pests out. The plants require a lot of water, about 1-2 inches a week until a fruit appears. Once the buds of fruit appear, take the covers off and reduce water. Try thumping the melon to test if they are ready to harvest! If it sounds hollow, its ready to harvest. Cut the stem of close to the fruit with a sharp knife.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Since watermelons are mostly water, they help you stay hydrated. Watermelon is also a great source of nutrients, such as vitamins A and C as well as antioxidants and amino acids.



BOOKS

Watermelon for Everyone
by Martha Rose Woodward

Watermelon Day
by Kathi Appelt

PALMETTO PICK OF THE MONTH SNACK

Watermelon is a great snack by itself. Eat it in the morning, afternoon, or even for a late-night snack.

