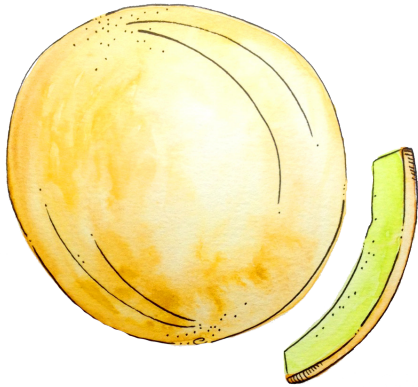


# MELONS

Educator | [VermontHarvestoftheMonth.org](http://VermontHarvestoftheMonth.org)

Harvest of the Month provides resources for the cafeteria, classroom, and community to promote the use of local, seasonal foods.



## Varieties of Melon

The most common types of melons in grocery stores are honeydew, cantaloupe and watermelon. Aside from the standard pink-fleshed watermelon, other varieties have yellow flesh (like the Early Moonbeam), orange flesh (like the Desert King), or even white flesh (like the White Wonder)!

Muskmelons (such as honeydew and cantaloupe) come in a huge variety as well. Their flesh ranges from white to yellow/orange, to green and their shape can be similar to a cucumber or more oval shaped. Their outside skin can vary from light to dark as well.

## History

Muskmelons (like cantaloupe & honeydew) originated in Southeast Asia. They were one of the first cultivated fruits and were introduced to Europe during the Bronze Age. Watermelon is originally from southern Africa and there is evidence of its cultivation in the Nile Valley from the year 2,000 BC onward.

## Benefits

Melons are nutritious fruits that have high levels of vitamins A, B6 and C and are high in antioxidants, amino acids and potassium. They also have a high water content, which aids in digestion.

## Mini-activities

- Guess the number of seeds inside a slice of watermelon or in the middle of a cantaloupe.
- Have students guess the weight of different-sized melons.
- Have a blind taste test with different varieties of melon or differently colored watermelon varieties.

## Reading Corner

- » *Anansi and the Talking Melon*, by Eric A. Kimmel & Janet Stevens
- » *One Watermelon Seed*, by Celia Barker Lottridge
- » *Watermelon Day*, by Kathi Appelt
- » *The Watermelon Seed*, by Greg Pizzoli



# MELONS

Educator | VermontHarvestoftheMonth.org

## CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

### **Math** | *Measuring Melons, 3rd grade and up*

Supplies needed:

Various-sized melons, measuring devices (ruler, string, and scale), handout for recording measurements

Directions:

1. Place a melon at each table.
2. Ask students to work in small groups to measure the length, width, diameter, circumference, radius, and weight of each melon.
3. Have students record their findings; as a class, make a chart that compares and contrasts the various melons.

### **English** | *Melon Autobiography, 3rd grade*

Supplies needed:

Images of varieties of muskmelon and watermelon

Directions:

1. Explain to students that they will imagine that they are a melon and will write an autobiography of their life from seed to plate. This is a great opportunity to explain what an autobiography is (a story written in the 1st person).
2. Before they work on their stories, go through the life cycle of a melon as a group. (Seed, sprout, seedling, mature plant with vines, flower emerges, flower gets pollinated, fruit forms & grows, fruit gets picked, sliced & eaten). More information for educators can be found here: <https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/82-flowering-plant-life-cycles>  
Students can watch this video before writing their stories: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ3fRXIyqyM>
3. Explain to students that they have to cover all of the main life cycle points, but can be creative with their stories and embellish them as much as they'd like. The guiding words below may be helpful to the students for each season.

Guiding words:

- Winter: cold, snow
- Spring: warm soil, planting, beginning, small leaves, rain, sun, nutrients
- Summer: rain, sun, nutrients, growth, large leaves, long days, vines, flower, pollinate, fruit grow, harvesting, eaten (by insects and humans)
- Fall: last harvest, vines dying, garden clean-up

