

2018 Specialty Melon Trial

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Transplanting date: May 29, 2018

Production system: Raised beds with drip irrigation and black plastic film.

Design: Randomized Complete Block with 3 replications and 5 plants/rep/variety.

Spacing: 2' in-row and 7" between rows

Harvest dates: July 27 through August 29, 2018

Variety	Source	Type	Days to Maturity
Earli Dew	Harris Seeds	Honeydew	85
Dream Dew	Harris	Honeydew	82
Lambkin	Harris	Piel de Sapo	75
Durasol	Harris	Canary	75
Masada	Harris	Galia	80
Passport	Harris	Galia	70
Honey Blonde	Johnny's	Honeydew	71
Snow Leopard	Johnny's	Honeydew	71
Sapomiel	Johnny's	Piel de Sapo	85
San Juan	Johnny's	Ananas	78
Savor	Johnny's	French Charentais	78
Lilly	Johnny's	Crenshaw	78
Brilliant	Johnny's	Canary	75
Dewlightful	Seedway	Honeydew	90
New Moon	Seedway	Honeydew	85
Camposol	Seedway	Canary	80
Camino	Seedway	Canary	84
Visa	Seedway	Galia	69
Pixie	Seedway	Palm	76
Ginkaku	Pinetree Gardens	Korean	70
Green Nutmeg	Pinetree Gardens	Heirloom	80
Ogden	Pinetree Gardens	Middle Eastern	85

Table 1. The marketable yield and quality of 22 specialty melon varieties grown at the Horticulture Research Farm, Rock Springs, PA - 2018.

Variety	No. fruit per plant	Avg fruit wt. - lbs	% Soluble solids	# rotten fruit
Earli-Dew	1.8	2.8	8.8	23
DreamDew	2.0	3.9	6.8	7
Lambkin	0.5	1.0	5.2	0
Durasol	2.2	2.9	8.8	7
Masada	1.4	3.2	8.3	0
Passport	1.3	3.3	9.3	18
Honey Blonde	3.4	3.3	12.4	0
Snow Leopard	4.8	2.3	8.5	0
Sapomiel	1.9	6.5	8.9	0
San Juan	2.7	3.3	10.3	0
Savor	3.0	2.8	10.2	45
Lilly	2.5	6.0	9.0	0
Brilliant	1.3	1.9	7.8	3
Dewlightful	2.0	5.1	12.1	0
New Moon	3.1	3.1	9.8	2
Composol	2.0	4.6	8.1	2
Camino	2.0	2.7	9.3	0
Visa	2.6	3.2	9.9	0
Pixie	1.6	2.6	10.9	0
Ginkaku	6.5	1.3	14.7	9
Green Nutmeg	5.1	1.4	7.8	5
Ogden	1.2	2.9	8.0	0

Discussion

The weather in 2018 was not ideal for specialty melon production. Cooler, cloudy than normal days resulted in extended maturity to harvest and lower than normal soluble solid readings in most varieties. However, there was a variety of melon sizes, shapes and colors to chose from. The two varieties that produced the highest fruit per plant were Ginkaku and Snow Leopard. Not only did Ginkaku have the highest number of fruit per plant, but the fruit also were the sweetest with a soluble solids reading of 14.7%. Both Delightful and Honey Blonde fruit had higher soluble solids readings compared to other varieties in the trial. Varieties with the highest average fruit weight were Sapomiel and Lilly. The variety with the smallest average fruit weight was Lambkin which also had the lowest number of fruit per plant.

Varieties that have potential for production in PA because of their yield, fruit size and quality (%SS) include Ginkaku, Honey Blonde, Dewlightful, Lilly and Visa. These 5 varieties and a few more will be re-evaluated in 2019.