



**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION • SACRAMENTO COUNTY**



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Garden Notes

**Fair Oaks Horticulture Center – 2007
MELONS**

Culture: Melons need rich, fertile, and well-drained soil. They require high temperatures during the growing season and do best in warm interior valleys. Sow melon seeds when soil temperatures exceed 75°F; set out transplants only after all danger of frost has passed. Vines have separate male and female flowers, and bees are required for pollination. Avoid using insecticides or bees may be harmed. Male blooms form first and do not set fruit; do not be concerned when male flowers fall off. There are approximately 35-45 days from pollination to harvest, depending upon the type of melon. Apply water so the soil is evenly moist and give deep soakings until the fruits reach their mature size. Then reduce watering when the first melon is ripe to concentrate flavors and eliminate cracking. Melons are relatives of cucumbers, squash, pumpkin, and watermelon, all of which are known as the cucurbits. They suffer from similar pests and diseases.

Varieties: The melon varieties listed below were grown in the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center Vegetable Demonstration Area during the spring and summer of 2007. Seeds were sown in 4-inch peat pots on a staggered schedule beginning April 17. Propagation (heating) mats and grow lights aided in the rapid germination of the plants (average germination time was 4 days). Melons were transplanted into the ground when there were 2-3 true leaves present beginning on May 17. They were trained up concrete reinforcing wire/channel fencing trellises to allow more plants within a confined space. Plants were fertilized with kelp when the first true leaves emerged; they were also fertilized with fish emulsion and kelp when the vines began to run and again at fruit set.

Variety	Type	Color (Flesh)	Days to Maturity*
‘Ambrosia Hybrid’	Cantaloupe	Peach	84
‘Arava’	Galia	Green	75
‘Bartlett Hybrid’	Honeydew	White	88
‘Crane’	Crenshaw	Light orange	75-85
‘Crème de la Crème Hybrid’	Ananas	White, pale orange marbling	75
‘Honey Girl Hybrid’	Charentais	Orange	75

*Days to maturity – The approximate time between seed sowing and appearance of the first ripe fruit.

Seed sources: W. Atlee Burpee Company, Territorial Seed Company, and Seed Savers Exchange

To simplify information, trade names of products and company names have been used. No endorsement of named products or companies is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products or companies that are not mentioned.

July 2007 - Written by Master Gardener Gail Pothour.
Edited by Judy McClure, UC Master Gardener Program Coordinator.



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