

WATERMELON

Hawaiian Names: *Ipu wai, ipu haole*

Common Names: Watermelon

Scientific Name: *Citrullus lanatus*

Origin: Southern Africa

Plant Part Eaten: Fruit, rind, seeds



Locally Grown...

- In 2007, 540 acres were devoted to growing watermelon in Hawai'i.
- Hawai'i's summer climate is perfect to grow watermelon. They can be found at local farmers' markets and grocery stores between June and September.
- Locally grown organic watermelon can be found at Ululani Farm on Moloka'i.
- Miniature varieties like the Thai watermelon sell great in Hawai'i because they fit easily into a crowded fridge.



Where else it's grown in the world...

Watermelon is grown in 96 countries worldwide, mostly across tropical regions. In the United States, Florida, Texas, California, Georgia, and Arizona lead the nation's production. China is the world's leading producer.

Nutrition Info...

- Good source of Vitamins A & C.
- Very good source of fluid (water) and also low in calories.
- Good source of lycopene, an antioxidant that protects the body from free radicals and disease.



Meet a Farmer...

Farm: Sugarland Farms

Farmers: Larry Jefts

Location: Kunia, O'ahu

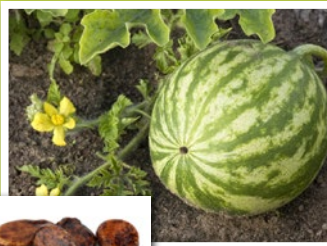


Sugarland Farms in Kunia, O'ahu, is one of the largest farms in Hawai'i, supplying local residents with fresh produce such as green peppers, tomatoes, head cabbage, Chinese cabbage, apple bananas and the juiciest watermelons.

Owner Larry Jefts comes from a family of farmers, and was one of the first to operate large diversified farming in Hawai'i, in the midst of being told it couldn't be done.

In the Garden...

- Watermelon grow best in well drained soil with a pH of 6.0-6.8.
- Form planting mounds about 3" tall and 12"-18" wide to improve drainage.
- Plant 2 seeds, 1" deep in each mound.



- Thin to one plant per mound after they have at least two leaves.
- Improve growth by controlling weeds.
- Grow several plants to help attract bees that are required for pollination.
- The first crop is ready in 2-3 months. Look for a pale yellow spot on the bottom of fruits. This indicates ripeness.

Let's Get Cooking...

Watermelon Feta Salad

Ingredients

1 small seedless watermelon
 ½ cup of crumbled feta cheese
 10 basil leaves, torn

1. Cut watermelon into cubes, removing rind.
2. Top with crumbled feta and torn basil leaves.
3. Drizzle with balsamic glaze.



Balsamic Glaze

Ingredients

1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
 2-4 Tablespoons sugar

Combine ingredients in a pot and simmer until reduced and syrupy.

You can also cut your watermelon into wedges and top it like a pizza!

*Recipes by
 Leigh Adams,
 Tiers of Joy*



Reminder: Please compost your food waste.



What can you make with a watermelon?

Most people enjoy watermelon chilled and sliced or as a part of a fruit salad. Watermelon can also be made into popsicles, juice, or even gazpacho--a type of cold soup. Try watermelon in a salad, salsa, or a watermelon and bell pepper slush. You can also roast the seeds for a snack.

Did you know?

1. In times of water scarcity, watermelons have been used as a 'living canteen' in Africa. The fruits contain up to 92% water.
2. All parts of the watermelon fruit are edible, including the rind, which can be pickled or stir-fried.
3. Watermelon is a botanical cousin of cucumber, pumpkin, and squash.
4. Watermelons come in a variety of colors: yellow, red, orange and even white.
5. Lycopene (the antioxidant in tomatoes) gives watermelons their delicious red color.
6. The Guinness Book of World Records (2005) documented a 268 pound watermelon. A typical watermelon weighs between 5-40 pounds.
7. Watermelons are seen depicted in ancient Egyptian heiroglyphics and seeds have been found in burial tombs.



Fresh Choice Hawaiian Harvest celebrates the diverse, nutritious, and delicious bounty grown in Hawai'i, encouraging children and their families to eat more locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. The Fresh Choice Hawaiian Harvest Toolkit includes educational resource sheets, family take-home letters, produce preparation sheets, and a poster showcasing Hawai'i-grown crops. For downloads and more information, visit www.kokuahawaiiifoundation.org/HawaiianHarvest.

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