



Please search YouTube for “**Chef in the Garden Episode 23**” to find this kit’s video

Recipes provided by Dina Altieri of American Culinary Federation

Local Melon Salsa

Yield: 1 cup

- 2/3 cup melon, small diced
- 2 TBSP cucumber, small diced
- 2 TBSP jicama, small diced
- 1 tsp small jalapeno, or to taste
- 1 tsp green onion or to taste
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 lime, juiced
- Coarse salt to taste
- 1 pinch chili powder or to taste
- 2 tsp chopped cilantro



Instructions:

1. Peel and dice melon, cucumber, and jicama. Remove stem, seeds, and inner pith/rib from jalapeno and mince. Combine in a mixing bowl.
2. Add honey and lime juice and mix gently to combine.
3. Add a pinch of salt at a time, mix and taste. Only add as much salt as you need.
4. Add ½ tsp of chili powder and taste. If you like it spicier, add a bit more.
5. Finish salsa with freshly chopped cilantro right before serving.
6. Taste and re-balance salt, sweet (honey), sour (lime) and spice (chili powder) if necessary.
7. Serve with chips or as a topping for grilled chicken, burgers, tacos or fish.
8. Store unused salsa in a covered container in the refrigerator. Discard if not used by the 7th day.

Planting melons with Master Gardener Mr. Pikle

1. Melons can trail along the ground or climb like a vine. They can take up a lot of space so sometimes people choose to have them climb like a vine. They need strong support if they climb because they are heavy. If the melon fruit develops on the ground, put something under the fruit when it grows like cardboard, plastic or mulch.
2. Melons like a sunny location. Plant it in a raised garden, pot, or right into the soil in your yard!
3. Once you have picked a planting location, dig a hole in the soil a little larger than the container.
4. Gently squeeze the plant to loosen it from the container.
5. While placing your hand on the top of the soil around the plant stem, turn the container upside down. Sometimes dirt falls out and that’s ok!

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@BlueWatermelonProject, #chefinthegardenaz. We would love to hear from you!

6. Gently pull the plastic container up and away from the new plant and turn the plant back upright. Tickle the roots if they are wound around the outside of the soil, this tells them they can now grow outward.
7. Place the plant into the hole you dug earlier and try to get the top of the new soil even or level with the ground. Fill the soil around the root ball.
8. Water your melon daily. It has to flower before the melon fruit will grow.

5.L4U3.11 and/or 5.G2.1

We need bees!

The interaction between bees and plants has a huge impact on the health of crops. As pollinators, bees play a critical role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. As bees fly from plant to plant gathering pollen to make honey, they are also transferring pollen between plants. This transfer is called pollination and it is required for many plants to make seeds. This is especially true for melons. Any effect on the bee population can have a ripple effect on our ability to grow and harvest melons. For example, when we use pesticides to keep unwanted bugs away, we may also be harming bees. If the bee population declines, then the melon pollination will decrease. As a result of a smaller bee population, fewer melons will be harvested. While bees are important to melons, they also play an important role in many other crops such as vegetables, nuts, seeds, fibers (like cotton), and hay. As we can see, species interactions are essential to a healthy ecosystem.



Teachers, here is a link to a YouTube video that explains pesticides and their impact on the bee population: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xr-VFczNm9Y>



Melons are Adapted to the Heat

Melons are sensitive to the world around them. They need a warm environment to grow and have a low tolerance for cold weather. Even temperatures just below 70 degrees can slow a melon's growth. On the other hand, melons will often grow bigger and quicker in hot temperatures. Melon seeds are just waiting to sprout until the weather and soil get nice and warm. This is why we see more melons in the grocery store in the warm summer months. As the environment undergoes climate change, weather patterns shift and become unpredictable. For melons, this means in some areas that were not previously prone to frost where melons used to grow well, could cause significant damage to the crop. Weather pattern changes can therefore shift the growing season for many plants, including melons.

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