

# Gary's Organic

## *Watermelons!*



Watermelon is truly one of summertime's sweetest treats. It is fun to eat, and good for you. Watermelon seeds were brought to this country by African slaves. Today there are more than 100 different varieties of watermelons. The flesh may be red, pink, orange or yellow. There are seedless varieties and super-sweet round ones that fit nicely into the refrigerator.

### **Selection & Storage**

*Producing a good watermelon is a bit tricky in the short northern season. The sweetest watermelons grow during long hot summers. Harvesting is particularly critical because watermelons do not continue to ripen after they have been removed from the vine. They should be picked at full maturity. No amount of thumping, tapping, sniffing, or shaking can actually give a clue to ripeness.*

Look for melons that are very heavy and have a hard rind. Ninety percent of watermelon is water. The rind color should be right for the variety with a waxy bloom. Probably the most important indicator of ripeness is the underside which sets on the ground. Turn the melon over. It should be yellow or creamy colored on the underside. If it is white or pale green the melon is not ready to harvest.

### **Recipes**

#### **Watermelon Granita**

5 cups seeded watermelon pulp  
 1 cup sugar syrup\*  
 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
 Thin watermelon wedges, cut into strips for a garnish  
 Puree watermelon in a food processor.

POUR INTO A 9 X 13 INCH BAKING DISH. STIR IN THE SYRUP AND LEMON JUICE. FREEZE FOR ABOUT 4 HOURS OR UNTIL FROZEN SOLID. TO SERVE, SCRAPE UP GRANITA WITH A LARGE SPOON AND PLACE IN GOBLETS, TULIP SHAPED WINE GLASSES OR ICE CREAM DISHES. GARNISH WITH A NARROW WEDGE OF WATERMELON. MAKES 4 SERVINGS. TO MAKE SUGAR SYRUP; COMBINE 1/2 CUP WATER AND 1 CUP SUGAR IN A SAUCEPAN. BRING TO A BOIL OVER MEDIUM-HIGH HEAT. BOIL FOR ONE MINUTE. STIRRING CONSTANTLY UNTIL ALL OF THE SUGAR HAS DISSOLVED. COOL IN THE REFRIGERATOR.

#### **Watermelon Smoothie**

1 - 8 ounce lemon, fat-free yogurt  
 3 cups cubed, seeded watermelon  
 1 pint fresh strawberries, cleaned and hulled  
 1 tablespoon honey or strawberry jam  
 3 ice cubes

IN A BLENDER OR FOOD PROCESSOR, COMBINE YOGURT, WATERMELON, STRAWBERRIES, HONEY AND ICE CUBES. PROCESS UNTIL SMOOTH AND FROTHY. SERVE IN TALL GLASSES WITH A STRAW. MAKES 4 SERVINGS.

The flesh should be deep colored with mature seeds. Most watermelons have dark brown or black seeds. The seedless variety produces a few white seeds. Once picked, uncut watermelon can be stored for about 2 weeks at room temperature especially if the temperature is about 45 to 50°. Uncut watermelons have a shorter refrigerator life, so store at room temperature until ready to chill and eat. Tightly cover cut pieces in plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.

### Nutritional Value & Health Benefits

Watermelons are low in calories and very nutritious. Watermelon is high in lycopene, second only to tomatoes. Recent research suggests that lycopene, a powerful antioxidant, is effective in preventing some forms of cancer and cardiovascular disease. According to research conducted at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, men who consumed a lycopene-rich diet were half as likely to suffer a heart attack as those who had little or no lycopene in their diets.

Watermelon is also high in Vitamin C and Vitamin A, in the form of disease fighting beta-carotene. Research also suggests that the red pigmented foods provide this protection. Lycopene and beta-carotene work in conjunction with other plant chemicals not found in vitamin/mineral supplements. Potassium is also available, which is believed to help control blood pressure and possibly prevent strokes.

#### **Nutrition Facts** (1 wedge, or 1/16 of a melon, about 1-2/3 cup)

Calories 91.52  
Protein 1.77 grams  
Carbohydrates 20.54 grams  
Dietary Fiber 1.43 grams  
Potassium 331.76 mg  
Vitamin C 27.46 mg  
Vitamin A 1046.76 IU

### Recommended Varieties

#### **Early (70 to 75 days to harvest)**

**Golden Crown** (red flesh, green skin; skin turns yellow when ripe)

**Sugar Baby** (red flesh, 6 to 10 pounds)

**Yellow Baby** (hybrid-yellow flesh, 6 to 10 pounds)

**Yellow Doll** (hybrid-yellow flesh, 6 to 10 pounds)**Main Season (80 to 85 days)**

**Charleston Gray** (red, 20 to 25 pounds)

**Crimson Sweet** (red, 20 to 25 pounds)

**Madera** (hybrid-red, 14 to 22 pounds)

**Parker** (hybrid-red, 22 to 25 pounds)

**Sangria** (hybrid-red, 22 to 26 pounds)

**Sunny's Pride** (hybrid-red, 20 to 22 pounds)

**Sweet Favorite** (hybrid-red, 20 pounds).

**Seedless (all are triploid hybrids, 80 to 85 days)**

**Cotton Candy** (red, 15 to 20 pounds)

**Crimson Trio** (red, 14 to 16 pounds)

**Honey Heart** (yellow flesh, 8 to 10 pounds)

**Jack of Hearts** (red, 14 to 18 pounds)

**Nova** (red, 15 to 17 pounds)

**Queen of Hearts** (red, 12 to 16 pounds)

**Tiffany** (red, 14 to 22 pounds).

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#### THE POLITICS OF FOOD.....

Foreign politics, land politics, racial, sexual, and religious politics are common in the media today, but food politics? What's that? What's so political about food? World hunger, land reform, pollution, biotechnology, transitional corporations, and deforestation are all political issues tied in with the production, distribution, and consumption of food.

Production of food begins with the seed. The seed can be planted and grown organically using traditional and sustainable growing methods. The food grown from the seed can go to feed the people and animals on the farm. If there is a surplus the food can also be distributed to the rest of the community and outlying areas. Seeds from the crops are saved by the farmer for planting during the next growing season. Within this type of system the produc-

tion of the food is less centralized and more control rests with the farmers and ranchers who produce the food. Or, the seed can be a product of advanced technology controlled by a corporation.

These seeds require large inputs of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and fungicides to produce high yields. This system gives the large land owners and corporate farms the competitive advantage over smaller, less market driven farms. The chemical inputs pollute the environment, use more energy, expose the people who work the farms to cancer causing substances and pose health risks to the people eating the food.. Under this system, the corporations have the vast majority, if not all, of the control

## **Organic Farmers Sue GMO Giants Monsanto And Aventis**

A group of organic farmers in Saskatchewan is suing two multinational companies that make genetically modified products: Monsanto and Aventis.

The farmers say their fields are being invaded by genetically engineered seeds planted by the companies. As a result, they can't guarantee their own products are free from genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

"We have no problem with their technology as long as they can segregate it and keep it out of our fields and out of our system," says Arnold Taylor, president of the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate.

SOD filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of all the certified organic farmers in the province.

"We are seeking damages for the loss of our canola and of our market," says Taylor.

The farmers say they can't sell their organic product anywhere, especially to the European Union where strict rules prohibit any GMOs from being present in any part of the process.

Monsanto introduced a genetically modified canola in 1996, one year after Aventis introduced a similar product. Both canola plants have been modified to be immune to the most widely used herbicide on the prairies. Since (the companies) started five, six years ago, it has been virtually impossible to find any seed stock that's uncontaminated," says Taylor.

### **Injunction to prevent modified wheat**

Taylor says drifting seeds have caused cross-pollination with organic seeds and it has cost farmers millions of dollars.

This isn't the first time organic farmers and biotechnology companies have gone to court.

Saskatchewan farmer Percy Schmeiser lost his case against Monsanto in April 2001.

'It's your seed, you are responsible for it and it's on our land' He sued the company, claiming its GM canola seeds blew onto his property. Schmeiser had been trying to keep his crop GMO-free. The company countersued saying Schmeiser used their seeds.

Taylor says SOD's lawsuit is different.

"We are saying 'It's your seed, you are responsible for it. It's on our land and we want compensation for damages.'"

Beyond compensation, SOD is seeking an injunction to prevent Monsanto and Aventis from planting modified wheat.

Monsanto is testing a genetically modified wheat and wants to release it within two years.

Taylor says that would be a disaster for all organic farmers in the province.

"We obviously cannot afford to lose wheat which is our largest crop and biggest market."

The companies have not yet filed statements of defence and won't comment on the claim.

Written by CBC News Online staff

**Billion Dollar Monsanto Sues More Small Family Farmers**

Percy Schmeiser is a farmer from Saskatchewan Canada whose Canola fields were contaminated with Monsanto's genetically engineered Round-Up Ready Canola by pollen from a nearby farm. Monsanto says it doesn't matter how the contamination took place, and is therefore demanding Schmeiser pay their Technology Fee (the fee farmers must pay to grow Monsanto's genetically engineered products). According to Schmeiser, "I never had anything to do with Monsanto, outside of buying chemicals. I never signed a contract. If I would go to St. Louis (Monsanto Headquarters) and contaminate their plots--destroy what they have worked on for 40 years--I think I would be put in jail and the key thrown away."

Oakhurst Dairy has been owned and operated by the same Maine family since 1921, and Monsanto recently attempted to put them out of business. Oakhurst, like many other dairy producers in the U.S., has been responding to consumer demand to provide milk free of rBGH, a synthetic hormone banned (for health reasons) in every industrialized country other than the U.S. Monsanto, the number one producer of the rBGH synthetic steroid, sued Oakhurst, claiming they should not have the right to inform their customers that their dairy products do not contain the Monsanto chemical. Given the intense pressure from the transnational corporation, Oakhurst was forced to settle out of court, leaving many other dairies vulnerable to similar attacks from Monsanto.

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**SIGN THE MILLIONS AGAINST MONSANTO PETITION**

THIS PETITION DEMANDS THAT THE CORPORATION:

- Stop intimidating small family farmers.
- Stop force-feeding untested and unlabeled genetically engineered foods on consumers.
- Stop using billions of dollars of U.S. taxpayers' money to subsidize genetically engineered crops--cotton, soybeans, corn, and canola.

**Petition Located at:**

**<http://www.organicconsumers.org/monfax.cfm>**

***Contact Your Congressman or Get More Information:***

<http://www.citizen.org/congress/voting/>