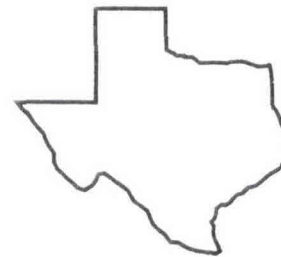
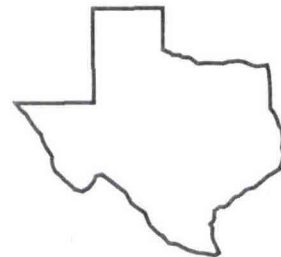


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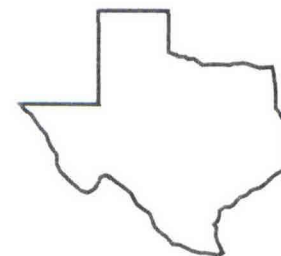
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Texas Agricultural Experiment Station
Texas Agricultural Extension Service
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Overton Field Day Report - 1994



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HYBRID WATERMELON EVALUATIONS - 1993

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Background. Texas annually ranks second in watermelon production in the United States. East Texas is considered as Texas' major production area with 25,000 acres. The East Texas watermelon production area is characterized by small scale farming operations. Improved varieties showing greater yield, earlier maturity, higher quality, and improved disease resistance/tolerance open up new local market potentials for such operations.

Research Findings. Hybrid watermelon plants were set 3 ft apart in the row on 29 April on raised beds spaced 8 ft apart. The beds were covered with black plastic mulch. Irrigation was by drip. Fertilization was by recommendation by the Texas A&M University Soil Testing Lab.

The data presented in Table 1 were from one harvest date (July 9). 'Fiesta' was the highest yielding entry in the trial with 50% of the melons weighing in the 11-19 lb range. 'Summer Flavor 400' was the second highest producer with approximately 42% of its melons weighing between 20 and 29 lbs. The majority of melons harvested in this trial fell within this 20 to 29 lb range. 'Summer Flavor 710' produced 63% of its melons within this range. All entries had soluble solids concentrations above 10%.

Application. Continued profitability of watermelon production in the East Texas area is contingent upon development of watermelon cultivars that demonstrate adaptability to this area. Information gained from these trials can be used to inform growers of the production potential of some of the newer varieties being offered by seed companies. With further varietal evaluations and innovative cultural practices, watermelon production in East Texas could increase well above its current 33% of total production in Texas.

Additional Information. More detailed information can be obtained from the authors or your local county agent by requesting TAES progress report number PR-5147 titled "Hybrid Watermelon Evaluations For East Texas: A Four-Year Study".

Table 1. Total yield, percent of melons in four weight ranges, and percent soluble solids concentration of 9 hybrid watermelons evaluated at Overton, Texas - 1993.

Entry	Seed source ^Z	Total yield (lbs/ac)	Weight range (lbs)				Soluble solids conc. (%)
			<30	20-29	11-19	>10	
Fiesta	3	46,198	11	37	50	2	12.2
Summer Flavor 400	1	37,764	22	42	36	0	12.0
Star Brite	2	33,493	13	31	56	0	10.2
Patriot	4	32,561	0	31	69	0	11.2
Parker	4	29,500	0	22	67	11	11.8
Summer Flavor 700	1	26,959	0	52	40	8	12.2
Summer Flavor 710	1	24,853	25	63	12	0	10.4
Summer Flavor 410	1	23,159	0	24	76	0	10.8
Jubilee II	2	21,695	0	47	53	0	10.4
LSD (0.05)		NS	NS	NS	NS	---	

^ZSeed Source: 1 - Abbott & Cobb; 2 - Asgrow; 3 - Northrup King; 4 - Wilhite

Date Transplanted - April 29

Date Harvested - July 8

Total 1993 Rainfall - 13.73 inches

Dates Irrigated - None

Plant Population - 1,815/ac (8 ft x 3 ft)