

Easy to grow in a container!

Love the
Food
You Eat!

Growing Watermelon

Watermelons love the heat! Bush varieties can be grown in large containers on patios and decks. They have more compact vines, some just 3' long. Choose a variety that best suits you, low and trailing or climbing/vine. Also, base your variety choices on disease resistance, fruit size, (stick with smaller fruits in short season areas or if you plan to trellis the vines) flavor, and color.



When and How to Plant:

From Seed-Direct seed 1 to 2 weeks after average last frost when soil is 70 degrees or warmer. Plant 1/2 inch deep, 6 seeds per hill, hills 3 feet apart each way for bush varieties, or 3 feet apart in rows 8 feet apart for vining types.

Transplant- Keep soil in contact when transplanting. Mulch plantings after soil has warmed to help maintain consistent moisture and suppress weeds. If using fabric row covers, remove at flowering to allow pollination by bees. Good pollination is critical to fruit set. Plants require consistent moisture until pollination.

Preferred Sunlight: Full Sun.

Preferred Soil Conditions: Prefers warm, well-drained soil, high in organic matter. Consistent, plentiful moisture needed until fruit is about the size of a tennis ball. Soil temperatures below 50 degrees slow growth. Consider using black plastic and fabric row covers to speed soil warming. Sandy or light textured soils that warm quickly in spring are best. Avoid planting cucumber family crops, (melons, squash, pumpkins) in the same spot two years in a row.

Maintenance & Care: Once fruit are about the size of a tennis ball, only water if soil is dry and leaves show signs of wilting. To prevent insect damage on developing fruits, place watermelons on pots or pieces of wood.

If growing watermelons on a trellis, support fruit with slings made from netting, fabric or pantyhose. Trellising improves air circulation around plants and can help reduce foliar disease problems. Choose small fruited varieties and reduce plant spacing.



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Some varieties recommended for New York include:

Crimson Sweet
Moon & Stars
Sugar Baby
Yellow Baby
Yellow Doll

Source:

**Cornell University, Home Gardening, Vegetable Growing Guides.
For a complete Growing Guide and additional information visit.**

www.gardening.cornell.edu



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