



The
MARYLAND
STATE FAIR

Educating about Agriculture



WATERMELON
An amazing fruit!
Good for you!
Fun to eat!

Let's check out one of your favorite
foods grown on Maryland farms!

How does a watermelon grow?

Seeds are planted in the ground and a vine begins to grow. Some vines can be as long as 12 feet. Flowers form on the vine, are pollinated by bees, and soon baby watermelons begin to grow.



Cube Shaped Watermelons???

The novelty of a cubed shaped watermelon began in Japan where they would grow watermelons in glass boxes to hold their shape.



Seeds or No Seeds?

In 2003, 42 percent of watermelons sold in grocery stores had seeds. Today, only 16 percent have seeds. There's really no difference between seedless and seeded watermelon when it comes to taste. Watermelons with seeds allowed for "seed spitting" contests to see who could make their seed go the farthest! Seedless watermelons were invented over 50 years ago, and they have few or no black seeds. The white seed coats where a seed did not fully mature in a seedless watermelon are assumed to be seeds. But this isn't the case! They are perfectly safe to swallow while eating, and don't worry – no watermelons will grow in your stomach.

Visit <https://www.watermelon.org/> for more seedless information.

Be a Watermelon Detective

1. Look at the color on the top. The watermelon is ripe when there is little contrast between the stripes. Each watermelon has an even number of stripes on the rind. The ordinary watermelon will have 10 stripes on it. The larger ones may have 12 to 16 stripes, but always in even numbers.
2. Look at the color on the bottom. A *green* watermelon will have a white bottom; a *ripe* melon will have a cream or yellow colored bottom.
3. Press on the watermelon. If the watermelon sounds like it gives a little, it's ripe.
4. Check the stem. If it's green, wait. If it's half-dead, the watermelon is nearly ripe or ripe. If the tendril is fully dead, it's ripe or overripe; it's not going to get any riper, so you might as well pick it!



Some Fun Activities to Try with Watermelon

ERUPTING WATERMELON VOLCANO

YOU WILL NEED:

- Small watermelon (personal)
- Baking soda
- Vinegar
- Dish soap
- Food coloring {optional}



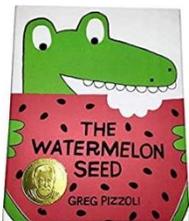
1. To prepare your watermelon, cut a small hole on the top of the watermelon like carving a pumpkin. Make the opening just big enough to scoop out the fruit but as small as possible to allow for the most exciting eruption.

Note: When the reaction occurs, the gas needs to be forced upwards to make a cool exit. A smaller opening will give this effect. A larger opening will allow the gas to disperse creating less of a grand exit!

2. Scoop out the melon fruit. Using an ice cream scoop or melon baller makes this task easier. Put aside the watermelon to enjoy after the eruption!
3. Add at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of baking soda.
4. Add several squirts of dish washing liquid.
5. Optional: add several drops of food coloring.
6. Place the watermelon on a tray to catch the eruption.
7. Add straight vinegar and watch the watermelon erupt!



Listen to a Watermelon Book



<https://youtu.be/4l4Zw8mUeLc>

Eat Watermelon on a Stick

Ask an adult to cut watermelon into wedges. Insert a craft stick into the rind. Enjoy without messy fingers!



WATERMELON JOKES

Joke Answers

1. When you are eating a watermelon.
2. He lost his mind.
3. They are seedy!

- A. When do you go at red and stop at green?
- B. Why did the watermelon go crazy?
- C. Why shouldn't you go into business with a watermelon?