



Cucumbers and Melons

Growing Tips

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Cucumbers (*Cucumis sativus*)

Cucurbitaceae family

- Vine crops
- Related to Melons (*Cucumis melo*)
- Warm season
- Both cucumbers and melons have traditionally required a lot of garden space.
 - With a trellis and newer compact varieties, cucumbers may be grown in small spaces and even in containers.

Types of Cucumbers

- Slicing cucumbers are long and slender, with a dark green skin.
 - Burpless—soft mild-flavored
- Pickling varieties are short and blocky in shape, with a firm flesh that makes a crisp pickle.
- Vining & bush types:
 - Dwarf types



Soils and Fertilizer

- Prefer deep, well drained soils
 - Cucumbers can be grown in heavier soils pretty easily.
- Plant after all danger of frost is past.
 - Early to mid-May in most of eastern and central KS
 - Seeds will not germinate if soil temperature is below 50 F and germinate only slowly at 68 F.
- Apply 1-2 pounds of 10-10-10 or 12-12-12 per 100 ft² before planting.
- Plant 1-3 seeds per "hill", with each "hill" spaces 2 feet apart in rows 5-6 feet apart for cucumbers and smaller melons.

Flowering and pollination

- Vine crops all produce separate male and female flowers on the same plant.
- Bees required for pollination
- Both flower types are yellow, but the female



Cultivation and Care

- Flowers are open in the morning and early afternoon, when bees are active.
 - Avoid spraying any insecticides on the plants when the flowers are open to protect pollinators.
- When vines are vigorously growing and starting to set fruit they have the greatest requirement for water.
- Use row covers to avoid cucumber beetle.
 - Remove when plants begin to set flowers.

Trellising

- To save space, train vining cucumbers to a trellis.
- Trellising allows for increased air circulation, thus reduced disease pressure
- Can make harvest easier, and may produce straighter plants about 10 inches apart

