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DOMINION OF CANADA.

**EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.**

J. H. GRISDALE, B.Agr., D.Sc.A.,  
Director.

W. T. MACOUN,  
Dominion Horticulturist.

**MELON CULTURE**

By W. T. MACOUN, *Dominion Horticulturist.*

Both muskmelons and watermelons are very popular in Canada, but in some parts of the country, owing to the short season, special methods of culture must be adopted to have them ripen during the warm weather, when they are most in demand.

More attention has been given to the culture of muskmelons in Canada than to watermelons, although the latter are grown extensively in the warmer districts. The name cantaloupe is now applied to all muskmelons alike by some people, but the true cantaloupes are muskmelons of the type of the rough hard-skinned melons grown in Southern Europe and the Southern States but seldom met with in Canada. Being a native of Persia and other parts of Asia, where there is great heat in the growing season, the muskmelon to do well must be kept in a high temperature from the time the seed is sown until the melons are ripe. If the seeds are sown in cold soil they are likely to rot. If the young plants are not well protected when started early in the hot-bed they will be chilled and checked in their growth or killed, and if there are cool nights and the plants are exposed when they are in bloom, melons will not set. Furthermore, the slightest frost will kill the vines. Having these facts in mind, one can intelligently begin the culture of melons.

As the early melons are the most profitable the methods of obtaining these are described before giving general directions for growing them in the open. The melon growers in the vicinity of Montreal have given more attention to the production of large, high class early melons than anywhere else in Canada and as the excellent results which they have obtained show what can be done where the season is comparatively short, as it is over a large part of Canada, the first system of culture recommended is based largely on their methods.

The seed is sown in a greenhouse or hotbeds during the month of March or first days of April, either in pots or in rows about six inches apart and about half an inch deep in the soil. As soon as the plants appear above ground, ventilation is given the beds during the daytime, but they are closed at night. As soon as the plants begin to show the first rough leaf, they are pricked out into four-inch pots, or sometimes five-inch pots are used, setting two plants in the pot. At times it is desirable to transplant from a four-inch pot to a five- or six- inch pot if the plants have been started very early. Plants may also be started in pieces of sod or strawberry boxes. A piece of sod about four inches square is a satisfactory size, three or four seeds being planted in each piece. These sods are sunk in the soil in the hotbeds.

Some growers prefer sowing the seed in the frame where the vine is to remain. Warm, well-drained soil should be chosen for the melon plantation, as it is important to have as high a soil temperature as possible after the heat of the manure has been expended. The soil for melons is preferably rather light, but having a good supply of available plant food in it from a liberal application of barnyard manure which has been ploughed under. Trenches are opened in this soil two to two and a half feet in width and eighteen inches in depth, early in May, or the work may be done the previous autumn when, the soil, being exposed to the frost during the winter, becomes broken up. These trenches are dug in rows about twelve feet apart and as long as space will allow. Into these trenches is put actively fermenting horse manure, filling