

somewhat more difficult to grow to perfection.

SOIL AND PREPARATION.

The soil best adapted for their growth is a rich gravelly loam, or warm rich sandy soil with a well drained, or dry sub-soil.

It must be made very rich—no fear of the ground being too rich, if the manure used be not too hot or fiery. In the fall, dig into your land a large quantity of strong cow manure, or better still, if you are where you can get it, manure from a hog pen. In the following spring dig your melon plot over again, say about the end of April. Then in May prepare for sowing. There are two ways of planting followed—one, in hills, and the other in rows. I prefer the row system because in that way you can have manure more evenly distributed under the plants.

Dig good deep trenches about seven feet apart, throwing the earth out to each side. Then fill into these trenches a large quantity of good horse manure mixed with old leaves. Throw on some soil and mix all with a fork. This will prevent the fermentation being too rapid, and by this means the bottom heat will be continued for a longer time, etc. Put a little finely pulverized guano or hen manure on top, and fill in earth on top of this about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep and make all fine and smooth with a rake. Your row will then be slightly higher than the level of the ground.

Sow your seed along the center of this drill, or row, about one inch deep, and about two inches apart. Don't sow too soon, as melons are very easily injured by frost. Wait till you see the leaves pretty well started on the trees, which of course will vary with the season, but will generally give a most reliable indication of the advancement of vegetation.

When your plants are up, look out for cut worms and other pests. When your plants have become strong, with five or six leaves, and are past the danger of worms, thin out, leaving the best plants about 15 inches apart. Then carefully remove the dry earth from about the stems and bring up some fresh moist earth from the sides and put this round the plants right up to the leaves, making up the row from both sides about 4 feet in width—a little lower at the plants than out from them—leaving the surface pretty rough. Keep down weeds, and water occasionally if the weather be very dry.

When the vines begin to run, nip off the main vine, as it seldom bears any fruit, and the strength of the plant will be thrown into the fruit-bearing vines.

When the runners stretch out, the roughness on the surface will help to steady them. Don't let them get twisted about, and turned over with the wind, better steady them with little pegs till they are long enough to reach out their little tendrils and take hold on each other with these wonderful hands. Keep the vines so spread that they will evenly cover the ground, and not be thick in some spots and thin in others.

Your plot of melons should be so situated as to get the sun all day. They will do even better if the land slopes towards the west, so that the soil will be well warmed by the evening sun, and so remain warm well on throughout the night.

RIPENESS

When the musk melon is ripe the rich fragrance of the fruit will generally give warning, and generally the color changes, (but not always) and the stem will crack around where it joins the fruit, and the fruit will separate quite easily from the stem.