

# Melons

**1. Study the Nutrition Facts labels for cantaloupe, casaba, and honeydew melons. Make a list of nutrients found in each variety and write a brief sentence about the health benefits each provides to the body. Compare and contrast the nutrients for each melon. Refer to the Nutrition Facts label for watermelon. How does it compare to other melon varieties?**

- Cantaloupe (1 cup, balls) –
  - Excellent source of Vitamin C (65 mg)
  - Excellent source of Vitamin A (5986 iU)
- Casaba (1 cup, cubes) –
  - Excellent source of Vitamin C (37 mg)
  - Good source of Vitamin B6 (0.3mg)
- Honeydew (1 cup, balls) –
  - Excellent source of Vitamin C (32 mg)
  - Good source of potassium (404 mg)
- Watermelon (1 cup, balls) –
  - Excellent source of Vitamin C (13 mg)
  - Good source of Vitamin A (876 iU)
- All are excellent sources of Vitamin C, but cantaloupe is the richest source (almost as much as one orange, 70mg).
- Cantaloupe is also an excellent source of Vitamin A, an amount comparable to many vegetables.

**2. Melons are members of the gourd family. Make a list of other produce items that belong to this family. Is the melon a fruit or vegetable? Write a persuasive argument for your statement.**

- Gourd family members: cucumbers, melons, squash (winter and summer), pumpkins and luffa.
- Melons are a fleshy fruit – specifically a false berry.
- *Student arguments will vary but should include definitions for what is a fruit (dry versus fleshy, drupe versus berry) and what is a vegetable.*

**3. Cantaloupes were named after the Roman town of Cantalupo in Italy where they were grown in abundance. Locate this on a map and research how the ancient Romans used cantaloupes. Study how the melon has been used in other parts of the world. Sample different melon varieties with your family.**

- Cantalupo is part of modern-day Sabina – a town and commune in the province of Rieti. [Rieti is located in the Lazio region – along the central west coast of Italy.]
- Ancient Romans and Greeks used melons for medicinal purposes and also prepared it for the gods as a delicacy.
- Iraq, Egypt, Africa – Use melon flesh as a staple food, animal feed, and source of water in some dry regions.
- Asia, India – Roast melon seeds; preserve watermelon by salting or brining.
- Indian tribes and South America – Roast melon seeds; use in ceremonial meals and practices.
- Russia – Use watermelon juice to make beer, or boil juice down into heavy syrup (for use as sugar substitute).

Sources:

[www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/)

[www.plants.usda.gov](http://www.plants.usda.gov)

<http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/publications/vegetabletravelers/watermelon.html>

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