



LYCOPENE LEADER watermelon

Watermelon isn't just for dessert! Sliced watermelon flavors wonderfully with salt, pepper and goat cheese on bread as a sandwich or can be enjoyed atop a salad with citrus vinaigrette.

Red watermelon is a good source of lycopene, a phytonutrient that gives watermelon its color. Lycopene is an antioxidant that helps protect the body against conditions such as heart disease, inflammation and some cancers.

Did you know?

- Watermelon is fat-free, sodium-free, cholesterol-free, a good source of vitamin C and contains vitamin A.
- Watermelons are 92 percent water.
- Grown in the western parts of the state, from north Collier County to Columbia County, watermelon from Florida is available from late March until mid-July.

In Florida, watermelons are predominantly grown in Alachua, Charlotte, Collier, Columbia, Desoto, Gilchrist, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Jackson, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Sumter and Suwannee County.

Shopping, Preparing and Storing

- Whole melons will keep in the refrigerator for no longer than a week. Once cut, they should be kept refrigerated and covered with plastic wrap.
- Before cutting your watermelon, be sure to wipe it with a clean cloth and light, soapy water.
- Ripe watermelons have a yellow or cream-yellow ground spot in the place the melon rested on the soil. If this spot is green or white, the watermelon is probably not ripe.

Cooking Tips

- The flavor of watermelon can be enhanced by a squeeze of lemon juice, honey or chopped mint.

MIDSUMMER MELON SALSA

- 3 cups watermelon, diced
- ½ cup bell pepper, diced
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped
- 1 tablespoon green onions, chopped
- 1 tablespoon jalapeno pepper, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste



1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Mix thoroughly.
2. Cover and refrigerate for one hour. Serve with chips or atop fish.



FRUITS
Make most of your choices whole or cut fruit instead of juice.

VEGETABLES
Eat a variety every day. Fresh, canned or frozen.

GRAINS
Make at least half of your grains whole grains.

DAIRY
For adults and children 2 years and older, drink 1 percent low-fat or fat-free milk.

PROTEIN
Choose lean meat, poultry without the skin, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy or nuts.