Cucamelon

Melothria scabra

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 6 inches

Spacing: 18 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Mexican Sour Gherkin, Mouse Melon

Description:

Tiny little fruit that children can't get enough of; harvested at 1", these fruit have an incredible cucumber flavor with notes of citrus; delicious and crunchy, great as a snack, in salads or pickled; heat and disease resistant; good for garden and pots

Edible Qualities

Cucamelon is an annual vegetable plant that is commonly grown for its edible qualities. It produces small green oval fruit with dark green variegation which can be harvested at any point. The fruits have a tangy taste and a crunchy texture.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Eating When Cooked/Prepared
- Pickling
- Canning



Cucamelon fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Cucamelon
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Cucamelon will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 6 inches. When planted in rows, individual plants should be spaced approximately 18 inches apart. Because of its vigorous growth habit, it may require staking or supplemental support. This fast-growing vegetable plant is an annual, which means that it will grow for one season in your garden and then die after producing a crop.

This plant is typically grown in a designated vegetable garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under typical garden conditions. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. This plant does not require much in the way of fertilizing once established. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America..



Cucamelon fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Cucamelon is a good choice for the vegetable garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.