

Watermelons

For the United States as a whole, the watermelon season extends from May to October, a period of six months, but in the majority of individual states the season generally lasts but three or four months. California and Texas are exceptions to the rule, as their season is somewhat longer.

Beginning in May in Florida, California and Texas, the watermelon season extends gradually to the northern states, where it begins in August. The length of the season in each state and the gradual northward movement of the season is indicated by the table, which shows the average monthly shipments of watermelons by states during the three years.

MONTHLY SHIPMENTS OF WATERMELONS IN CARLOADS

Origin State	Year Total	Average 3 years 1924, 1925 and 1926											
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Fla.	7,310	1	..	..	..	190	4,498	2,611	10	..	..	..	..
Calif. ..	5,035	..	..	..	..	152	1,921	2,001	714	214	32	1	..
Tex.	5,328	..	..	..	..	20	1,072	3,010	1,117	100	8	1	..
Ga.	16,827	..	..	..	..	..	2,122	11,010	3,556	137	2	..	..
Ala.	2,013	..	..	..	..	..	171	1,328	418	93	3	..	..
Miss.	208	..	..	..	..	..	21	118	50	17	2	..	..
S. C.	4,867	..	..	..	..	..	21	3,926	905	15	..	..	..
N. C.	985	..	..	..	..	..	..	202	750	33	..	..	..
Ark.	411	..	..	..	..	..	..	138	270	3	..	..	..
Mo.	2,523	..	..	..	..	..	..	119	1,905	495	4	..	..
Va.	283	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	224	57	..	..
Md.	453	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	250	203	..	..
Del.	263	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	130	133	..	..
Ind.	471	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	206	261	4	..
Ill.	231	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	98	128	5	..
Iowa	158	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	72	82	4	..
Kans.	113	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	59	51	1	..
Other ..	873	..	..	..	..	9	104	104	430	214	12	..	..
U. S.	48,352	1	..	..	..	371	9,931	24,570	11,164	2,236	77	2	..

Average annual shipments of watermelons for the entire United States amounted to 48,352 carloads. Georgia was the leading shipper. That state alone accounted for 16,827 cars, or nearly 35 per cent of the total shipments. Florida was second, with 7,310 cars; Texas, third, with 5,328 cars; California, fourth, with 5,035 cars; South Carolina, fifth, with 4,867 cars; Missouri, sixth, with 2,523 cars, and Alabama, seventh, with 2,013 cars. These seven states combined furnished nearly 91 per cent of the total shipments. No other single state shipped so much as 1,000 cars. The watermelon crop is essentially a southern crop. Watermelon shipments lead all other fresh fruits and vegetables in Georgia and South Carolina, are second in Texas, Alabama and Missouri, and third in importance in Florida.

Beginning with light shipments in May, the movement increases rapidly to a peak in July, then declines with equal rapidity during the remainder of the season. The shipments in July averaged 24,570 cars, or nearly 51 per cent of the average annual movement during the three years. About 20 per cent moved in June and about 23 per cent in August. All the watermelon states participated in the movement in August. All but Florida participated in September, and all except Maryland, Delaware, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa in July. The peak movement from Florida was in June, that for California, Texas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and South Carolina was in July, while for the remaining states the peaks were about equally divided between August and September.

The longer seasons in California and Texas are indicated by the fact that shipments are made for nearly seven months. This is due, in part, to the diversity of climatic conditions in the two extremities of each state. In California, for example, there are two definite watermelon growing areas, the Imperial Valley and the Central Region. Shipments from the former cease in July but those from the latter continue during August and September.

Colorado, which is a large shipper of cantaloupes, does not appear in the list of important watermelon shipping states, while Florida, which is an important watermelon shipping state, does not appear in the list of important cantaloupe shipping states.

MONTHLY SHIPMENTS OF WATERMELONS BY STATE GROUPINGS

Scale—Thousands of cars

