

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 (1/2 cup, cubed)
 - Excellent source of Vitamin C (29 mg, 49% DV)
 - Excellent source of Vitamin A (2706 IU, 54% DV)
- Casaba (1/2 cup, cubed)
 - Excellent source of Vitamin C (18.5 mg, 31% DV)
 - A source of Vitamin B6 (0.139 mg, 7% DV)
- Honeydew (1/2 cup, cubed)
 - Excellent source of Vitamin C (15 mg, 26% DV)
 - A source of potassium (194 mg, 6% DV)
- Watermelon (1/2 cup, cubed)
 - Good source of Vitamin C (6 mg, 10% DV)
 - A source of Vitamin A (432 IU, 9% DV)

Primary-level response:

Cantaloupe is an excellent source of vitamin A, which is important for healthy vision. Cantaloupe, casaba, and honeydew are excellent sources of vitamin C, which helps the body to fight off illness, keep our immune system and gums healthy, and helps to heal wounds.

Secondary-level response:

Cantaloupe is an excellent source of vitamin A, which is important for healthy vision. Cantaloupe, casaba, and honeydew are excellent sources of vitamin C, which helps the body to fight off illness, keep our immune system and gums healthy, and helps to heal wounds. Melons also provide carotenoids. Carotenoids act like antioxidants by protecting the body from free radicals and may help protect the body from certain diseases. Watermelon is a source of a carotenoid known as lycopene which provides many important health benefits to the body. It may help prevent certain cancers and risk of heart disease.

- 2. What role do carotenoids play in the body? List some of their health benefits. Identify at least three fruits or vegetables that you like and that contain at least one carotenoid.**

Primary-level response:

- Carotenoids are the yellow, orange, and red colors (or pigments) found in some plants.
- Carotenoids are converted to vitamin A in our bodies.
- Carotenoids provide many health benefits to our bodies and help protect us from some diseases.
- Sources of carotenoids are carrots, spinach, kale, cantaloupe, and apricots.

Secondary-level response:

- Carotenoids are yellow, orange, and red pigments synthesized by some plants.
- The most common carotenoids are alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, beta-cryptoxanthin, lutein, zeaxanthin, and lycopene.
- Alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, and beta-cryptoxanthin are called provitamin A carotenoids because they are made into retinol in the body and then converted into vitamin A.
- Lycopene, lutein, and zeaxanthin do not have any provitamin A activity but provide many other important health benefits.
- Studies have found carotenoids function like antioxidants by protecting the body from free radicals and may help protect the body from some diseases.
- Sources of carotenoids are carrots, spinach, kale, cantaloupe, and apricots.

- 3. 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.**

Primary/Secondary-level response:

- Gourd family members: cucumbers, melons, squash (winter and summer), pumpkins, cucumber and luffa.
- Melons are in the fruit family. *[Student arguments will vary but should include definitions for what is a fruit (dry versus fleshy, drupe versus berry) and what is a vegetable. Refer to Botanical Facts in the newsletter (page 2) for additional facts.]*

Harvest of the Month

Network for a Healthy California

Student Sleuths – Answer Key

Sources:

www.plants.usda.gov

www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/

<http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/infocenter/phytochemicals/carotenoids/>

<http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/vitamina.asp>

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