

PERFORMANCE OF 12 ZUCCHINI SELECTIONS UNDER EARLY-SEASON CONDITIONS IN SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

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OBJECTIVE:

To evaluate adaptability of 12 zucchini varieties to southwest Michigan early-season growing conditions.

SUMMARY:

Five zucchini ('Spineless Beauty', RSQ0224-VP, SQX0202, 'Monitor' and SQX0102) had significantly higher total yields than other entries. Total yields ranged from 2378 half-bushels/acre ('Spineless Beauty') to 1192 hb/a ('Sensor'). Growers are cautioned against planting 'Spineless Beauty' for mid to late-season harvests due to its lack of virus tolerance.

METHODS:

Fertilizer: Prior to planting, 0-0-60, 33-0-0, and Solubor were broadcast and incorporated at 200, 150, and 10 pounds/acre, respectively. After planting 4-0-8-2(Ca) was applied through the drip irrigation at 1 pound nitrogen/acre/day. Application of 4-0-8-2 began on 11 June and continued through final harvest 30 July, 2003.

Fumigation/Herbicide: Beds were fumigated at shaping and plastic laying with 350 pounds/Acre 67/33% Methyl Bromide/Chloropicrin. Prior to planting, Curbit 3E at 2 pints/acre was applied between the plastic.

Planting: Direct seeding was done 21 May, 2003 in raised, plastic mulched beds, 6" high and 24" wide. Beds were spaced on 5.5' centers and in row spacing was 24" (3960 plants/acre). The trial was planted and analyzed as completely randomized design with four replications, eight plants/replication. Each plot was bordered by two guard plants.

Harvest and data collection: Harvest was conducted 12 times; 3 July through 30 July. Fruit was graded at each harvest into small, medium, large and cull.

RESULTS:

Total yield ranged from 2378 half-bushels/a (hb/a) for 'Spineless Beauty' to 1192 hb/a for 'Sensor'. Much of 'Spineless Beauty's' yield was due to leading yields in medium (650 hb/a) and large (1010 hb/a) fruit. Total yield for 'Spineless Beauty' was not significantly different than four other entries (RSQ0224-VP, SQX0202, 'Monitor' and SQX0102). Highest yield of small fruit came from RSQ0224-VP (774 hb/a). EXP718 had the highest yield of cull fruit (201 hb/a).

'Spineless Beauty' is the choice for many growers in southwest Michigan. It has good yield, medium green color and picks easily. Other high yielding entries in 2003 were similar in color to 'Spineless Beauty', SQX0102 and SQX0202 were darker in color, as were the lower yielding entries EXP718 and 'Sensor'. Since it does not have any virus tolerance, growers are cautioned about planting 'Spineless Beauty' for mid to late-season harvests when virus diseases are more of a concern.

Table 1. Yield of 12 zucchini varieties grown at the Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center, Benton Harbor, Michigan. Plants were grown on raised, plastic-mulched beds with drip irrigation. Plants were spaced 5.5 feet between rows and 24 inches in the row (3960 plants/a). Yields are in 1/2-bushels/acre.

Variety	Seed Source	Total Yield	Yield Small	% Total	Yield Medium	% Total	Yield Large	% Total	Yield Cull	% Total
Spineless Beauty	RS	2378	591	25	650	27	1010	42	127	5
RSQ0224-VP	RS	2153	774	36	564	27	737	34	79	4
SQX0202	SW	1907	461	24	410	21	935	49	101	5
Monitor	SS	1901	690	36	461	25	680	35	73	4
SQX0102	SW	1888	565	30	503	26	764	41	57	3
Dividend	RS	1850	644	34	470	25	612	34	125	7
Cashflow	RS	1840	619	34	506	28	641	35	74	4
Robustor	SS	1736	581	33	311	18	743	43	103	6
Payroll	RS	1637	518	31	528	33	470	28	122	8
Revenue	RS	1548	560	36	443	30	440	27	109	7
EXP718	SW	1431	452	32	270	19	509	35	201	14
Sensor	SS	1192	417	36	330	26	408	34	38	4
lsd _{0.05} =		500	218	7	201	9	242	9	64	4