

Watermelon Cultivar Trial 2002

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The 2002 watermelon cultivar trial evaluated eight diploid (seeded) and thirteen triploid (seedless) cultivars for Midwest production. The trial was grown on black plastic mulch and drip irrigated. Transplants were set in the field on May 30 and plant growth was favored by warm sunny growing conditions. Harvest occurred from August 1 thru August 28. Table 1 reports marketable yield - fruit that had good shape, color and a firm full sound when thumped. Number of fruit per acre and CWT/Acre were estimated from a plant population of 2,670 per acre. At least ten marketable fruit of each cultivar were cut open to evaluate internal quality and to obtain soluble solids (sweetness) readings. Yields and quality were considered exceptionally good this year with all entries showing merit. *Crimson Delight*, *Crimson Sweet* and *Celebration* were the first seeded cultivars to bear ripe fruit while *Imagination*, *Gypsy* and *RWT 8096* were the earliest seedless.

2002 Best Performers

Triploids: *Gypsy (HMX 8914)*, *Revolution*, *Tri X Palomar*, # 7167 .

Diploids: #820, *Jamboree*, *Sangria*, *HSR 3024*.

Materials and Methods

Planting: Planted in greenhouse, one seed per cell, 72 cell-pack, May 6, 1999.
Transplanted to the field May 30.

Plot Design: RCB, 3 reps. Plot = 1 row of 6 hills 28" apart, rows 7' apart (2,670 hills/acre).

Culture: Watermelons grown using plasticulture system. Fertilizer applied preplant incorporated under plastic mulch and through trickle tubes during growing season. Rates determined by soil and plant tests.

Pesticides: Curbit, Poast herbicide; Capture, Furadan 4F, Sevin XLR insecticide; Bravo 720, Quadris fungicide.

Table 1. Watermelon cultivar marketable yield and fruit characteristics.

Cultivar	Seed Source	DTH*	Market Fruit No./Acre	Market Yield CWT/A	Avg Frt Wt - lbs	% Soluble Solids	Comments
<i>Diploids</i>							
# 820	AC	78	4,358	1,281	29.6	11.4	<i>Allsweet type, extra large fruit</i>
Jamboree	RG	78	4,980	1,179	23.7	10.8	<i>Allsweet type</i>
# 790	AC	74	5,686	1,140	20.7	10.7	<i>Allsweet type</i>
Crimson Sweet	HL	69	5,798	1,135	19.6	10.8	<i>round, striped, pinkish red flesh</i>
Sangria	RG	76	5,603	1,073	18.6	11.5	<i>oblong, dark red flesh</i>
HSR 3024	HL	76	3,735	990	26.5	11.6	<i>large C.S. type, bright red flesh, good</i>
Crimson Delight	HL	68	4,565	978	21.5	11.2	<i>hybrid C.S. type</i>
Celebration	RG	70	3,943	953	23.9	10.9	<i>oblong, striped</i>
<i>Triploids</i>							
# 7167	AC	80	7,263	1,307	18.0	11.6	<i>striped long oval, firm flesh a little fibrous</i>
Revolution	SS	80	5,188	1,095	21.1	12.1	<i>oblong seedless Allsweet type, good quality</i>
Palomar	RG	82	5,810	1,082	18.7	11.5	<i>round, dark green striped rind, nice</i>
Gypsy (#8914)	HM	76	6,225	1,060	17.1	12.1	<i>round, striped, looks promising!</i>
Carousel	RG	82	4,980	1,052	21.1	11.9	<i>some hollow heart, oval/oblong, striped</i>
# 5544	AC	82	5,188	1,029	19.8	12.4	<i>oval/oblong, some hollow heart</i>
Cooperstown	SM	84	5,583	1,019	18.2	11.3	<i>round, striped,</i>
Tri X 313	RG	82	5,520	978	17.0	11.7	<i>some hollow heart, oval/oblong, striped</i>
RWT 8096	RG	76	4,980	953	19.4	11.3	<i>oval/oblong, striped, nice texture/flavor</i>
Imagination	RG	72	6,433	918	14.4	12.2	<i>flattened round shape, Sugar Baby type</i>
Trillion	AC	80	5,088	904	17.5	11.4	<i>oblong, striped</i>
Millenium	HM	82	6,018	839	14.0	12.2	<i>oval, dark green</i>
Freedom	SS	80	3,943	784	20.0	12.6	<i>oblong, Jubilee striped, excellent quality</i>
<i>Trial Avg.</i>			5,286	1,036	20.0	11.6	
<i>LSD 5%</i>			1,162	209	2.0		

*DTH = approximate days from transplanting to first significant harvest.