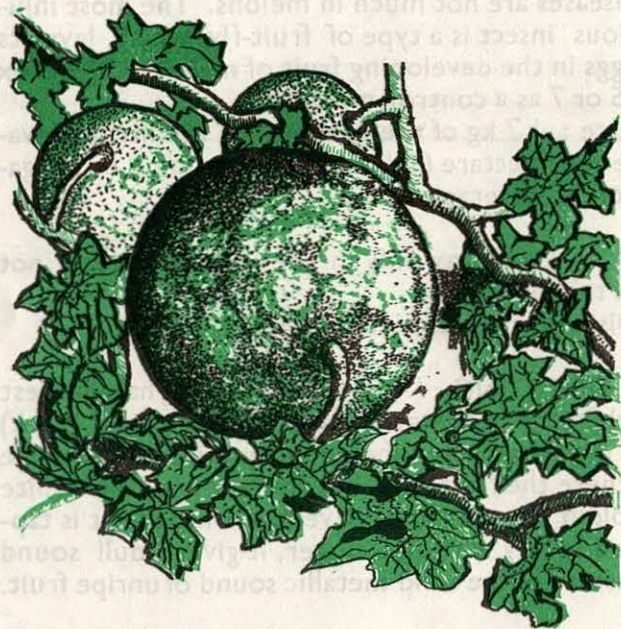


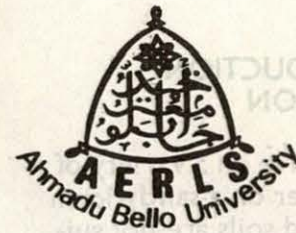
USAGE: After stripping the seeds from the seed crate, they are ground for use in soups (e.g. Egusi Soup) with leafy vegetable or Okra. The seeds are high in oil and protein content. The oil is used in cooking (like groundnut oil). The residue after extracting the oil can be fried into melon seed-balls (like Kuli kuli”).



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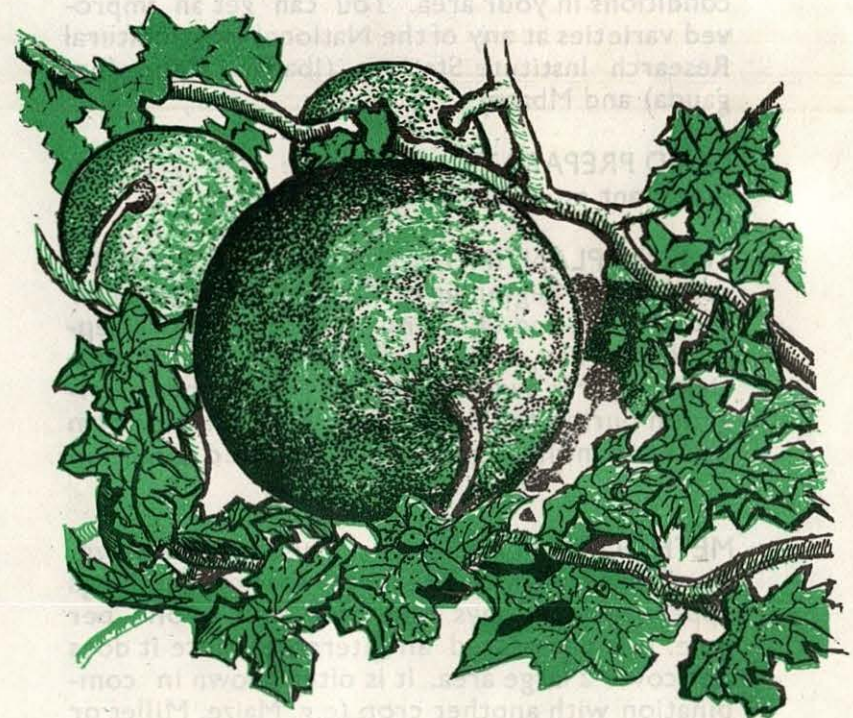
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GUIDE ON

THE PRODUCTION OF



MELON

(EGUSI)

Extension Guide No. 120

GUIDE ON THE PRODUCTION OF (EGUSI) MELON

SITE : Although melons thrive on a variety of soils, they do best and are earlier on a sandy-loam soil, naturally well-drained. Acid soils are not suitable to the production of melons.

VARIETIES : Grow varieties adapted to the local conditions in your area. You can get an improved varieties at any of the National Horticultural Research Institute Stations (Ibadan, Kano (Bagauda) and Mbato).

LAND PREPARATION : Prepare land early. You may plant on one metre (3 ft) ridges or flat.

TIME OF PLANTING : The seeds are generally sown at the beginning of the rains (May/June) or towards the end of the rainy season (August/September). They could be sown at any time if sufficient water is available. Crops grown under irrigation during the dry season generally perform better than those grown under rainfed conditions.

METHOD OF PLANTING : The seeds are sown, 2 to 3 per hole with 2x2 metre spacing. Seedlings appear in 4 to 7 days and later thin to one per hole. It is considered an intercrop; since it does not cover a large area. It is often grown in combination with another crop (e.g. Maize, Millet or Sorghum).

FERTILIZER : Usually not much response to Nitrogen on fertile fairly drained soils. 200 kg/ha of N.P.K. fertilizer (15 : 15 : 15) are usually applied before planting or 50 kg N/ha, 30 kg K₂O₅/ha. and 30 kg P₂O₅/ha.

At flowering, 100 kg/ha of sulphate of Ammonia or urea are applied as side dressing (15 cm. away from the seedlings).

CULTIVATION : Continue to weed until the plants cover-up.

PESTS AND DISEASES : Problems of pests and diseases are not much in melons. The most injurious insect is a type of fruit-fly which lays its eggs in the developing fruit of melons. Use vetox 85 or 7 as a control measure.

Rate : 1.7 kg of the chemical in 168 litres of water per hectare (1½ lb of the chemical in 15 gallon of wateracre).

NOTE : Spray only in the afternoons and not in the morning.

Diseases : Spray with Benlate.

HARVESTING : For egusi (14 kg/ha) harvest when the fruit stalk attached to the vine (neck) is dry. (For water-melon, note the colour change where the fruit touches the ground. the white colour changes to light yellow). If the fruit is tapped lightly with the finger, it gives a dull sound instead of the solid metallic sound of unripe fruit.

SEED PRODUCTION : Simply break or beat the fruit and heap them together, and leave to ferment or rot. Three days later when the pulp should have got rotten, extract the seeds.

Wash the seeds with water to get rid of the rotten pulp properly in the stream/river. Where water is not available rub the seeds against fine sands and dry them.