

Coronation Peak Ranches

Since 1996, Coronation Peak Ranches has been operating in Yuma Arizona. It is a first-generation farm that has 4 different partners and 50 employees during the busiest parts of each season. They grow winter vegetables such as lettuces, broccoli and cauliflower, as well as various melons. Melon varieties grown each year depend on what shippers ask for, but can include honey dew, mix melons, and several varieties of cantaloupe.

In total, Coronation Peak Ranches farms 3400 acres of winter vegetables and between 700 and 1000 acres of melons year-round. In mid-August, fall melons are planted along with their early vegetables. From mid-January to March, spring Melons and vegetables are planted. Coronation Peak Ranches has a great Cantaloupe harvest! They grow melons for labels like King Fisher and Pura Vida.

Melons can grow in a variety of ways. One of the methods used at Coronation is called a Yuma bed. This is done by planting sidehill beds, allowing them to get more sunlight. Melons love the sun! When they get more heat, they grow more quickly. Because of this, there is less prep time to get ready for cantaloupe harvest in the spring than in the colder, winter months.



Coronation Peak Ranches also subirrigates, which means they use a sprinkler pipe to germinate the seeds and then wait up to 60 days to water again. In this method, the furrows between the beds maintain a low level of water in between waterings. The water works its way up the bed and moistens the seeds. This process puts enough moisture into the soil to maintain the plant for up to 2 months. It also allows the roots to grow deeper into the soil which helps the cantaloupe plant survive hotter temperatures.

After the cantaloupes have emerged from the soil and begin growing, the farmers go through and reshape the plant beds. Any extra plants are removed first. Then they run a cultivator through the fields, a machine used to clean out the weeds and reshape the beds. They must do this in multiple

stages. It can take up to five different operation changes to the beds from sidehill to a regular bed with the seed line down the middle. They watch the plants carefully for signs of stress and water when needed. It is crucial not to over water the melons, as overwatering will ruin the quality of the fruit. Cantaloupes are picked fresh from the field when they are super ripe!