

# FARM FRIDAY FUN

## WITH ARIZONA AGRICULTURE

### CANTALOUPE FACTS

The melon that's most widely recognized as cantaloupe in the U.S. is actually a "reticulated muskmelon." This North American muskmelon is distinguished by its netted skin and strong scent. Its European counterpart- the true cantaloupe- has ribbed pale green skin and looks very different from our cantaloupe.

Cantaloupe derives its name from the town of Cantalupo, Italy, where cantaloupe seeds arrived from Armenia and were planted in the Papal Gardens in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Cantaloupe are members of a vine-crop family known as Cucurbitaceae, which includes other melons, squash, cucumbers, pumpkins, and gourds

When they are ripe, cantaloupe fruit will naturally slip from the vine and the skin will turn creamy-beige under the "netted" pattern on the melon.

Cantaloupe are low in calories. An average-sized cantaloupe contains only 100 calories.

Cantaloupe are the most popular melon in the United States.

Cantaloupe are packed with Vitamin A and antioxidants such as beta-carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin and cryptoxanthin. Compounds isolated from cantaloupe can prevent the development of certain types of cancer and cardiac diseases. They are also very beneficial for your eyes.

Cantaloupe is a trailing vine that can reach up to 5 feet in height and length thanks to numerous tendrils that bind to the nearby objects.

Cantaloupe produces oval, slightly lobed or heart-shaped leaves with serrated edges. They are dark green colored and often covered with hairs. Leaves are alternately arranged on the stem.

Cantaloupe is an annual plant, which means that it completes its life cycle in one year.

