



PACIFIC COAST  
FARMERS' MARKET  
ASSOCIATION

## SUMMER MELONS – CERTIFIED DELICIOUS!



You've just found a new variety of melon at your farmers' market, not the usual watermelon or cantaloupe, but a lovely yellow melon with rippled rind. Or there's one that's small, oval, and green with white flesh. You've just discovered one of the many reasons to shop your local certified farmers' market – variety!

We're celebrating certified farmers' markets and the value they bring to your local community during National Farmers' Market Week (August 7 thru 13). In fact, we're celebrating for the whole month of August! The unique varieties of [melons](#) and other fruits and vegetables you buy stimulate local economies, help preserve farmland, and increase access to healthy and nutritional food. Farmers' markets play an essential role in their communities by creating space for community connection and actively fostering more resilient and equitable local food systems.

What does it mean to be a [certified farmers' market](#) and why is it so important that you shop 'certified?' In short, it means that the produce is delivered to the market directly from the farm and from the growers themselves. In California, only California-grown produce may be certified for sale in our state's farmers' markets.

When you find that unique melon at your certified farmers' market you know it's locally-grown in California and of high quality. Fortunately, there are many varieties of melons grown in California. The most readily available are the honeydew, watermelon, and cantaloupe, but within these common melons are variations. For instance, watermelon can come in "refrigerator" sized (small and round), or with bright yellow flesh, rather than red.

Many specialty melons can only be found at your local certified farmers' market and offer remarkable flavor, texture, and color. The Crenshaw, Persian, Sharlyn, Santa Claus,

Casaba and the bittermelon, an Asian variety. A myriad of other varieties are also available this summer. Each have slightly different rind and flesh colors, sizes, and sweetness. Try them all!

Now that you've brought your melon home, we have some great ways for you to serve them:

- The ever popular cantaloupe wrapped with prosciutto, a sweet and salty bite that's a long-time favorite. Or make a salad with cantaloupe chunks, prosciutto, and mozzarella balls.
- [Melon ball and feta salad](#). Get yourself a melon baller, or just cut melons in cubes, toss with crumbled feta, pickled red onion, olive oil, and lemon juice.
- Blend melon and rosé wine for a [Melon Frozé](#).
- Make a fruity pizza with your favorite melon and ricotta cheese, and topped with fresh arugula.
- Watermelon ice pops can be made by blending the flesh and honey or sugar, water, and lemon juice, a real tasty treat on a hot summer day.
- Make a [chilled cantaloupe soup](#), refreshing and sweet.
- Whip up a [honeydew smoothie](#) for the kids after school, or make an adult beverage out of it with a jigger of gin, rum, or vodka.
- Honeydew and cucumber go well together, so toss them with red onion and feta or other salty cheese for a quick side salad.
- Another sweet/salty appetizer is honeydew or casaba melon wrapped with thinly sliced lox.
- Bittermelon is often overlooked as being too bitter, but in many culture it is used in stews, stir-fries, or soups. Talk with your farmer for some great recipes.

There are many other ways to enjoy summer melons, but sometimes the easiest is the best, especially when you slice into a perfectly chilled melon, fresh from the farmers' market. Visit Swank Farm from Hollister, Resendiz Farms out of Hughson, Wisher Farm in Fresno, or many of the other farmers who bring just-picked, vine-ripened melons to your farmers' market.

TAGS