

Watermelon

Post Harvest Technology

Grading

Watermelons are graded according to their size for local market. Distinction among grades is based predominantly on external appearances. However, watermelons should be symmetrical and uniform in appearance. The surface should be waxy and bright in appearance devoid of scars, sunburn, transit abrasions or other surface defects.

Packaging

The fruits are transported by road in bulk by stacking them on dried grass in trucks.

Storage

Watermelons can be stored for 14 days at 15°C. For short-term storage or transit to distant markets (> 7 days), watermelons can be stored at 7.2°C with 85-90% relative humidity. Extended holding at this temperature will induce chilling injury. Many watermelons are still shipped without pre-cooling or refrigeration during transit. These fruit must be utilized for prompt market sales as quality declines rapidly under these conditions.

Watermelons should not be stored with apples and bananas as the ethylene produced during storage from these fruits hastens softening and development of off flavour to watermelons.