

SAKATA WATERMELONS

Breeding Value

Earliness Pays

In recent years, not much attention was paid to breeding earliness into triploid watermelons because earliness didn't always equate with firmness and great yield potential. A grower had to choose one or the other. Not anymore! Today, Sakata has introduced excellent triploid varieties, like **Bold Ruler**, **Charismatic**, **Citation** and **Secretariat** that are firm and sweet, significantly earlier than standard varieties and offer high yield potential - the perfect formula for grower success.

Market data and trends show that in nearly every key seedless growing area in the United States, the price is highest at the beginning of harvest and continues to descend as harvest goes along. With this data it would seem to make sense that if a variety yields as much, has equal firmness and meets all other qualities of a later-maturing variety, then the grower would benefit financially by adding early-maturing varieties to their program. Seeing is believing for many growers including Dustin Blank, owner of B and H Farms in Estero, FL. Dustin comments, "We grew five varieties from three companies this season and **Charismatic** stood out the most across the board in earliness, quality, and tonnage. What's more, it held its size across multiple harvests."

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Dustin Blank, B and H Farms

Potential benefits of earliness include fewer sprays, less fertilizer, less irrigation and less exposure to weather risks. The greatest benefit of all could be the ability to take advantage of the early-market price while others are waiting to harvest later-maturing varieties.

Sakata Early Varieties + Early and Prolonged Pollenizers + Early Bees = SUCCESS

Since the pollen in triploid male flowers is not viable and female flowers in triploid plants require viable pollen to set fruit, it follows that there must be separate seeded pollenizer plants available to provide pollen.

Triploid watermelon is mainly pollinated by bees and other insects that hop from flower to flower and distribute pollen from seeded pollenizer plants to triploid hybrid plants. Because watermelon flowers open only for a short time, it is essential that bees and pollen are present during pollination. It is also essential that the full-flowering period of the seedless plants (which takes about 3-4 weeks) should match with the full-flowering period of the pollenizer plants, in order to have plenty of pollen



Triple Crown Winners

Early • Firm • Flavorful

**Belmont NEW,
Charismatic, Kingman,
Secretariat & Unbridled**

Get Ready to WIN!

Sakata's new collection of high-yielding seedless watermelon, including **Belmont**, **Charismatic**, **Kingman**, **Secretariat** and **Unbridled**, offers triple the benefit with the winning features of early or mid maturity, very firm flesh and delicious flavor. With a choice of size, dark or traditional rind, and maturity rate, picking a winner has never been so easy.

Early Maturing
Belmont NEW Mini / Dark rind
Charismatic 45-count / Dark rind
Secretariat 45-count / Traditional rind
Mid Maturing
Kingman 36/45-count / Traditional rind
Unbridled 36/45-count / Dark rind

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available during pollination. Lack of pollen during full flowering of seedless watermelon plants will have a negative effect on the total yield and fruit quality. Therefore, early-maturing seedless watermelon hybrids should be combined with early and prolonged-flowering pollenizer plants to get high yield and quality watermelon production in commercial production fields.

And, we cannot stress enough, when growing early-maturing watermelon hybrids, you must have the bees placed in the field earlier than with traditional, later varieties.

For winning results, Sakata recommends using **Ace** and **Wild Card** pollenizers.

Satisfying Consumer Demand for Smaller Melons

Another interesting opportunity for growers is that many consumers are moving towards a smaller watermelon, like **Citation** - a true 60-count.

Consumers are asking retailers for watermelons that are more family-sized and fit more easily into their refrigerators. Historically, growers haven't been able to make the yields they need with a smaller watermelon. But, the grower and consumer are in luck today as **Citation** watermelon sets more fruit per plant than older varieties, allowing growers to yield quantities equivalent to 45-count varieties. What's more, Sakata is continuing to develop new varieties that allow growers to meet this emerging consumer trend.