



# Melon Magic

## SAFE HANDLING PRACTICES

### Selecting a Melon

- Select melons with minimal imperfections, i.e., few sunken or dark spots
- Imperfections may help transport bacteria
- If mold is present, do not use

### Sanitizing the Kitchen Sink, Countertops and Cutting Boards

- Clean, rinse and sanitize all food contact surfaces, allowing surfaces to air dry

### Before Cutting Melons

- Wash the outside of the melon
  - If bacteria are present on the outer melon surface, it can transfer easily from the outer surface to the inner area while cutting
  - Wash melons with cool tap water. Soap/detergent is not recommended
  - Air dry melons on sanitary surface, then store in refrigerator until ready to cut

### Cutting and Preparing Melons

- Wash hands before cutting the melon
- Use only clean and sanitized utensils for cutting and preparation
- Use a barrier such as gloves, deli paper or an appropriate utensil to touch/cut melons
- Remove all rind from the melon
- Do not touch/cut melons with bare hands

### After Cutting Melons

- Wash hands again after cutting the melon
- Maintain the temperature of cut melons at 41°F or below. Cut melons should be displayed in a refrigerated case, not just displayed on top of ice. Uncut melons do not need to be refrigerated
- Date mark cut melons that are held more than 24 hours to indicate that they must be consumed or discarded within seven days
- Mark the time when cut melons are displayed without refrigeration. Cut melons may be displayed for a maximum of four hours without temperature control, and, if not eaten, must be thrown away at the end of four hours
- Offer toothpicks or single use/disposable serving utensils to consumers when offering samples
- Serve samples with gloved hands, changing gloves after touching any unsanitary surface or substance
- Avoid leaving samples unattended if possible



#### Sources

Information from: FDA Training Resources > Retail Food Safety Program  
Information Manual: Safe Handling Practices for Melons and University of  
Florida IFAS Extension Melons: Safe Handling Practices for Consumers