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Spring High Tunnel Radish Evaluations

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Spring radishes are a fast maturing crop for high tunnel production and can potentially have high value per unit area and time. Most radish cultivars grown in late winter/early spring within a high tunnel are harvested within 45 days from seeding and can be planted in the time period between the traditional winter crops and the spring/summer high tunnel crops. In addition, radishes can be intercropped with many vegetables. We evaluated ten salad radishes for spring production within a high tunnel.



D'Avignon



Rover



Amethyst

Figure 1. Radishes can have a diversity of shapes and colors.

Materials and Methods

Radishes can be seeded in a narrow band with 25-30 seeds per foot or broadcast-seeded over a larger area. The plant density should be approximately 1 in²/plant, ultimately resulting in 15-20 marketable radishes per square foot. For this trial, ten radish cultivars were broadcast-seeded in 2 ft. x 3 ft. plots on February 14, 2014 within a single layer high tunnel in central West Virginia. Row cover fabric (0.8 oz. /yd²) was placed over the plots continuously from seeding until harvest on April 11, 2014. At harvest, the roots were pulled, washed, weighed, and evaluated for quality from a square foot section of each plot. Each cultivar was replicated twice within a randomized complete block design.

Results and Discussion

'Amethyst' is a purple-skin radish cultivar with white flesh (Figure 1). 'D'Avignon' is a French breakfast-type that is typically 3 inches in length with red skin and a white tip (Figure 1). 'Ping Pong' is an attractive white radish, but can develop a slight green color on the top of some roots from exposure to sunlight. 'Crunchy Royale' and 'Rover' are excellent red salad radishes with uniform quality and high marketable yield (Table 1).

Table 1. Marketable yield and quality of high tunnel radishes.

Cultivar	Seed Source	Wt./Radish^z (ounces)	Diameter (in.)	Skin Color	Quality^y	Marketable Yield (ounces/ft ²)
Amethyst	JS	0.6	1.4	Purple	4.9	8.9
Cherriette	JS	0.6	1.5	Red	5.0	8.0
Crunchy Royale	JS	0.6	1.5	Red	5.0	10.1
D'Avignon	JS	0.6	1.3	Red/white tips	4.0	8.6
Easter Egg	—	0.8	1.2	Multi-color	3.0	4.9
Fakir	JS	0.5	1.3	Red/white tips	4.8	5.9
Pink Beauty	JS	0.5	1.3	Pink	4.0	7.2
Ping Pong	JS	0.4	1.4	White	4.5	7.1
Rudolf	JS	0.5	1.4	Red	3.5	9.6
Rover	JS	0.6	1.6	Red	5.0	11.1
<i>Mean</i>		<i>0.5</i>	<i>1.4</i>		<i>4.4</i>	<i>8.1</i>
<i>Standard error</i>		<i>0.03</i>	<i>0.05</i>		<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.7</i>

^zWeights are roots and leaves.

^yQuality rating: 1= poor; 5=excellent.