**Introduction**

Cantaloupe production in Indiana ranked fifth in planted area in the U.S. in 2017. A total of 1,800 acres of cantaloupe were planted with a value of $8.16 million (USDA 2018). Melon produced in Indiana is primarily eastern type cantaloupe. Specialty melons are gaining interest among small-sized growers as a way to differentiate the product in the local food market.

**Materials and Methods**

Twenty-one melon (*Cucumis melo*) varieties including eastern type cantaloupe, harper type melon, green-flesh netted melon, casaba melon, honeydew melon, and Tuscan melon were evaluated in the trial. Seed sources and melon descriptions are provided in Table 1.

Seeds of all the varieties were planted into 50-cell black seeding flats (T.O. Plastics, Clearwater, MN) on April 18, 2018, using a peat-based potting media (Metro-Mix® 360, a mixture of sphagnum peat moss, coarse perlite, bark ash, starter fertilizer, and dolomite). Transplants were produced in a greenhouse at the Southwest Purdue Agricultural Center (SWPAC). Plants were transplanted to the field on May 14, 2018.

The soil type of the experimental field is sandy loam with 0.8 percent organic matter. Soybean was previously grown in the field in 2017. A randomized complete block design with three blocks and 20 plants per variety per plot was used in the study. Plants were grown in raised beds covered with a 4 ft wide black plastic mulch (Visqueen 4020). Drip tape with a 12-inch emitter spacing and flow rate of 0.22 gpm/100 ft was used for irrigation. Bed spacing and in-row spacing were 6 and 2.5 ft, respectively. Fertilizers at the rate of 250 lb/acre urea (46-0-0), 100 lb/acre potash (0-0-60), 100 lb/acre diammonium phosphate (18-46-0), 200 lb/acre pelletized lime, 100 lb/acre K-Mag granular (0-0-22-11-22), 7 lb/acre boron 14.3% and 10 lb/acre Zinc 10% LS were pre-plant broadcast applied. During transplanting, each plant received approximately one cup of starter fertilizer solution (Miracle-Gro, 4.7 grams per gallon water).

Diseases were managed by scouting and using recommendations from Melcast (melcast.info) and the *Midwest Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers* (Egel et al., 2018). Bravo®, Luna Experience® and Cabrio® were rotationally sprayed for disease control. Admire Pro® was applied through transplant water at 4.3 fl. oz per acre rate. Permethrin® was applied on 1 June at 8.0 fl. oz/A and Warrior® applied on 14 June at 1.25 oz/A.

Disease severity of bacterial wilt was evaluated on 18 Jun, 25 Jun, 2 Jul, 8 Jul and 11 Jul using the Horsfall-Barratt rating system. Area under the disease progress curve (AUDPC) was calculated by trapezoidal integration.

Yield was assessed three times a week from July 5 to July 27. Fruit was weighed individually. Twelve fully ripe fruit from each variety were collected during peak harvest for the evaluation of...
fruit quality attributes. Fruit size, seed cavity size, total soluble solids, and flesh firmness were recorded. Data analysis of variance was performed using the Proc Anova procedure of SAS. Fisher’s least significant difference test ($\alpha = 0.05$) was conducted for multiple comparisons of different measurements among melon varieties.

**Results and Discussion**
A flush of striped cucumber beetles was observed at the end of May. Bacterial wilt (*Erwinia tracheiphila*) symptom was first noticed in middle June. Varieties with relatively low AUDPC values included the western-shipper cantaloupe ‘F39’ and eastern-type cantaloupes ‘Athena’ and ‘Aphrodite’ (Table 2). They had less than 10% plant wilt at the last disease rating. Variety Honeydew 252 and HD 150 were the most susceptible varieties to bacterial wilt. About 50% plant wilted at the last disease rating.

Varieties that had the highest marketable yields were Accolade, Athena, Astound and Aphrodite. No significant difference were detected among the four eastern type cantaloupe varieties. USAM 14836, F39, Infinite Gold and USAM 16141 also had relatively higher marketable yield. The trend for total yields among varieties were similar to that of the marketable yield (Table 3).

Variety Red Aroma, USAM 14836, Sheba, Miracle, Fondness, and Flourish had outstanding fruit quality with sugar content significantly higher than that of the eastern-type cantaloupes (Table 4). Miracle and Sheba are green flesh netted melons, while the others have orange flesh (Figure 1). Except USAM 14836 that showed a high yield potential and partial resistance to bacterial wilt, yield potentials were relatively low for the other aforementioned high quality melon varieties. Ideal melon size largely depends on melon type and market. Among the evaluated varieties, OC 164, HD 150 and Golden Aroma were significantly larger than the other varieties. Average fruit weight was above 7 lb. Variety Fondness, Da Vinci and Red Aroma were the smallest, with average fruit weight less than 4 lb (Table 4).

**References**


**Acknowledgements**
This project was partially supported by USDA-NIFA grant award: 2017-51181-26834. The authors would like to thank Angie Thompson, Bill Davis, Barbara Joyner and Alex Plummer for their invaluable technical assistance with the variety trial. We also want to thank the seed companies listed in table 1 for their financial support.
Table 1. Varieties, melon descriptions, and seed sources of varieties in the 2018 melon variety trial in Indiana.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Melon Description</th>
<th>Seed Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accolade</td>
<td>Eastern cantaloupe</td>
<td>Southwest Purdue Agricultural Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aphrodite</td>
<td>Eastern cantaloupe</td>
<td>Southwest Purdue Agricultural Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astound</td>
<td>Eastern cantaloupe</td>
<td>Southwest Purdue Agricultural Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athena</td>
<td>Eastern cantaloupe</td>
<td>Southwest Purdue Agricultural Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dainty</td>
<td>Non-slip orange fresh cantaloupe</td>
<td>Known-You Seed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da Vinci</td>
<td>Tuscan type</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University</td>
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<td>Western shipper cantaloupe</td>
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<td>Non-slip orange fresh cantaloupe</td>
<td>Known-You Seed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fondness</td>
<td>Non-slip orange fresh cantaloupe</td>
<td>Known-You Seed</td>
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<td>Golden Aroma</td>
<td>Non-slip hami melon</td>
<td>Known-You Seed</td>
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<td>Experimental honeydew</td>
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<td>Commercial honeydew</td>
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<td>Harper</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University</td>
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<td>Miracle</td>
<td>Non-slip netted yellow-green fresh melon</td>
<td>Known-You Seed</td>
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<td>Orange casaba</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Non-slip sweet &amp; sour melon</td>
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<td>Known-You Seed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheba</td>
<td>Non-slip netted green fresh melon</td>
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<td>USAM 14836</td>
<td>Harper</td>
<td>US Agriseeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAM 14837</td>
<td>Harper</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAM 16141</td>
<td>Harper</td>
<td>US Agriseeds</td>
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Table 2. Severity of bacterial wilt (*Erwinia tracheiphila*) on melon varieties as measured by the Area Under the Disease Progress Curve (AUDPC) in the 2018 variety trial in Indiana.

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<tr>
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<td>Athena</td>
<td>142.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>223.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Da Vinci</td>
<td>619.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>F39</td>
<td>102.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Honeydew 252</td>
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<td>USAM 16141</td>
<td>236.2</td>
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*Means within a column followed by the same letter are not significantly different according to Fisher’s least significant difference test at $P \leq 0.05$. 

²
Table 3. Marketable and total yield of melon varieties in the 2018 melon variety trial in Indiana.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Marketable fruit weight (lb) per acre</th>
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<th>Total fruit weight (lb) per acre</th>
<th>Total fruit number per acre</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accolade</td>
<td>41,324 a²</td>
<td>7,405 abc</td>
<td>42,926 a</td>
<td>7,744 bc</td>
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<td>Aphrodite</td>
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<td>5,905 bcdef</td>
<td>41,320 ab</td>
<td>6,340 de</td>
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<td>39,576 a</td>
<td>6,921 abcd</td>
<td>41,400 ab</td>
<td>7,356 bcde</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athena</td>
<td>39,949 a</td>
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<td>41,344 ab</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dainty</td>
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<td>5,033 efgh</td>
<td>33,446 cdefg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Da Vinci</td>
<td>20,031 cdef</td>
<td>5,856 bcdef</td>
<td>26,291 ghi</td>
<td>8,131 ab</td>
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<tr>
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<td>32,339 ab</td>
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<td>36,134 abcde</td>
<td>9,147 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Sheba</td>
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<td>8,421 ab</td>
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<td>39,605 abc</td>
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Table 4. Average fruit weight and fruit quality parameters of melon varieties in the 2018 variety trial in Indiana.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Average fruit weight (lb)</th>
<th>Length (cm)</th>
<th>Width (cm)</th>
<th>Seed cavity length (cm)</th>
<th>Seed cavity width (cm)</th>
<th>Firmness (lbs-force)</th>
<th>Total soluble solids (°Brix)</th>
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<td>d</td>
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<td>dedef</td>
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<td>cd</td>
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<td>c</td>
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<td>de</td>
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<td>g</td>
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<td>jk</td>
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<td>def</td>
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<td>bede</td>
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<td>Honeydew 252</td>
<td>6.6</td>
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<td>hi</td>
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Means within a column followed by the same letter are not significantly different according to Fisher’s least significant difference test at $P \leq 0.05$. 
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Accolade

Figure 1. Exterior and interior of melon varieties in the 2018 variety trial in Indian.