



Giant 200 lb. watermelon produced a bumper crop of seeds worth \$8 apiece.

**WORLD'S FIRST 200 POUNDER
BRINGING \$8 FOR SINGLE SEED**

There's Big Money In Big Watermelons

For \$8, Ivan and Lloyd Bright, of Hope, Ark., will send you a single seed from their 200 lb. watermelon, said to be the biggest one ever grown. Seeds from their record-breaking melon, which has been officially entered in the Guinness book of records, are shipped on miniature velvet pillows affixed to an affidavit of authenticity, signed and sworn to by Ivan Bright, nine witnesses and a notary public.

If you're just interested in large melons rather than record-breaking ones, the Brights will sell you seeds for 160 to 180 lb. melons for \$10 per dozen, or seeds in the 120 to 130 lb. class for \$2 per dozen.

The Brights and their neighbors have been growing giant-size watermelons in the Hope, Ark., area for years, making it the world's "Giant Watermelon Capitol". Nearly 50 years ago, a 195 lb. melon was grown there. The Brights grew a 178 lb. champion in 1977, then followed with their world champion 200 pounder two years later. It all began in the early 1920's with the advent of growing contests to stimulate competition. Melons over 100 lbs. became common. For the last decade, growers have been shooting for the 200 lb. mark. Now that it's been achieved, they've set their sights still higher.

"A champion watermelon is not grown by a secret formula. It's just the result of the right combination of management and growing conditions," says Bright. "But you have to start with the right variety."

The Bright champion melon was a cross between a long striped melon, Carolina Cross, and a round green melon, Cobb Gem. It was grown in a field where giant melons have been common for a number of years. Key management steps are as follows:

- Disc the land and broadcast fertilizer.
- Plant as early as possible. (The champion melon was planted on April 21).
- Space the hills 12 ft. apart.
- Irrigate the field if it's dry.
- After melons start to form, remove all but one from each vine.
- Keep weeds under control, and turn each melon frequently to keep it from rotting on the side toward the ground.

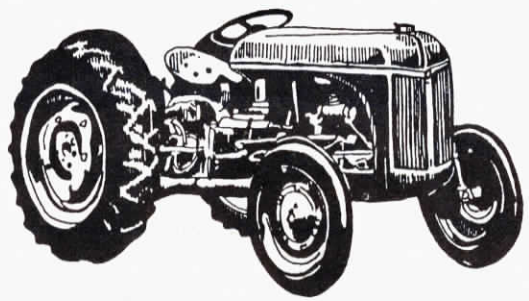
Bright's champion watermelon was picked on August 26, a little more than four months after it was planted.

Hope watermelon growers have a lot of other tips about growing, some of which are scientific, and some are folklore. One grower who has raised local champions, insists that some of his success is due to plowing his fields barefoot. Back in the 20's, some growers added more weight to mature melons by feeding them sugar water through a wick. Ivan says that it's essential to keep moving melons when they get large to get some slack in the vines.

Why grow giant watermelons, anyway? Part of the answer is just for the fun and the rivalry with other growers. But there's also big money in big melons for use in exhibits and promotions, and for eating. Ivan says they're remarkably tasty and sell well at roadside stands. Giant melons bring a premium price, from \$20 to \$50, depending on size and quality.

The Brights also offer a 58-page book, "Producing Giant Watermelons", for \$3, including a dozen watermelon seeds.

For any of these materials, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ivan Bright, Route 2, Box 55, Hope, Ark. 71801.



Many of the old Ford, Fordson and Ford-Ferguson tractors are still being used today.

**NEW "FORD PRESERVATION SOCIETY"
FOR OWNERS OF 2N, 8N AND 9N FORDS**

Got A Ford Tractor? Come Join The Club

by Frank Buckingham

One of the country's newest "collector groups" is the "Ford 2N, 8N and 9N Preservation Society" founded by J. Todd Miles of Milbury, Mass. Miles also publishes a bimonthly newsletter called *Small Farmer* for members of the new Preservation Society.

Says Miles: "Anyone can advertise in the newsletter. But most want to buy or sell Ford tractors, or parts. Right now, parts are the major concern of anyone wanting to restore these tractors. Ford no longer makes engine blocks for these models and replacement blocks must be obtained from other tractors. Certain other parts are equally hard to find and command a good price on the used market."

Ford Preservation Society membership costs \$5 per year and includes six issues of the *Small Farmer* newsletter. In addition to ads for tractors, parts and similar items, much of the newsletter is devoted to questions and answers on various aspects of Ford tractor renovation. If Miles, or other experts he can call on, is unable to provide answers, the question is printed in the newsletter and readers are invited to send answers — how to solve particular problems, where to find specific parts, does anyone have an original operator's manual, etc.

The 9N Ford-Ferguson was introduced in 1939, followed by the 2N in 1942. The red and gray Ford 8N came

out in 1947 following the separation of Ford and Ferguson. According to Ford Tractor Operations, more than 800,000 "N" series Ford tractors were built from 1939 to 1952, and many are still in use on farms around the world.

Miles says it depends somewhat on the part of the country, but any "N" that even barely runs will bring about \$500 today. However, one that's been rebuilt and has good paint may sell for \$2,000 or more. At a recent wholesale equipment auction in Alabama, two 1951 8N's in "excellent" condition brought \$1,650 each and another of the same age sold for \$1,700. A 1948 8N in "good" condition went for \$1,400. A recent ad in the *Small Farmer* offered five "N's" for \$1,000 and up apiece.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, J. Todd Miles, Graystone Farm, Milbury, Mass. 01527 (ph 617 754-4612). Miles asks that anyone wishing a sample copy of the *Small Farmer* newsletter please enclose a stamped self-addressed, business-size envelope.

If you're interested in the older Fordson tractors, introduced in 1917, contact: Charles R. Hope, Jr., R. 2, Box 1434, Purcellville, Va. 22132 (ph 703 338-2500). In England, a Fordson Owner's Club is headed by Arthur Batelle, editor of *Fordson Magazine*, Abaston, Derby, England.



The Ford 2N, 8N and 9N Preservation Society wants to keep these tractors "alive".