

Kiwano jelly melon (Horned melon) Farming

Also called African horned cucumber/melon, Kiwano jelly melon is originally from Africa but is now cultivated in different regions globally. Kiwano jelly melon thrives in warm climates with temperatures between 70°F – 100°F, and well drained sandy loam soil with good organic matter content. The jelly melon can be grown from seeds which are readily available, which are started indoors, and transplanted once the risk of frost has passed. Kiwano jelly melon farming offers a unique opportunity for growers to cultivate and market an exotic fruit with an appealing taste and appearance. While Kiwano jelly melon growing may require some specialized knowledge and attention, the potential reward in terms of gain and satisfaction makes it a promising venture.

Seed propagation, planting, and watering

Kiwano jelly melon can be grown from seeds which are readily available from reputable seed suppliers. The seeds are started indoors and transplanted once the risk of frost has passed. Plant the seeds about 1 inch deep and 3-4 feet apart in rows, and provide support for the vines to spread on the ground. Kiwano jelly melon requires regular watering to keep the soil consistently moist. Avoid over-watering to prevent root rot.

Fertilization, pest & disease management

Ensure you apply a balanced fertilizer before planting and during the growing season to ensure healthy growth. Common pests and diseases affecting the plant include aphids, cucumber beetles, and powdery mildew. Implement organic pest control methods and keep the garden clean to minimize disease risks. Kiwano jelly melons are ready for harvest 70-90 days after planting and are harvested when they turn orange/golden yellow and the spikes start to soften.