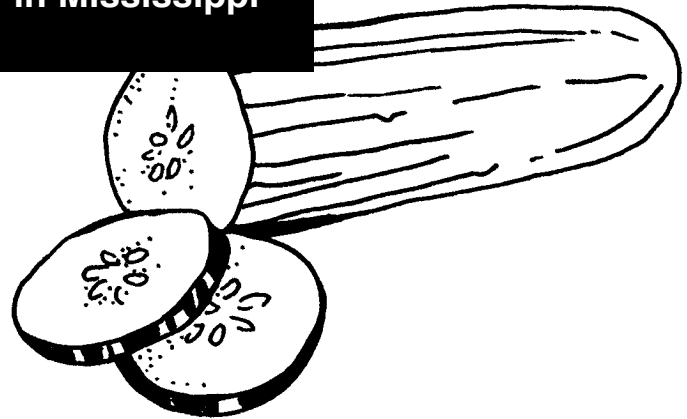


# Cucumbers in Mississippi



*Cucumbers are particularly sensitive to drought. Irrigation can improve yields dramatically in medium or low rainfall years.*

## Soil

Cucumbers require a well-drained soil with a good supply of organic matter. Cucumbers tolerate a soil pH between 5.5 and 6.5, but grow best at a soil pH of 6.0 to 6.2. Do not grow cucumbers where any other cucurbit crop was grown the previous year.

## Varieties

### Pickling:

Royal—52 days, spring; gynoecious hybrid and disease-resistant.

Calypso—45 days, fall; 55 days, spring; gynoecious hybrid and disease-resistant.

### Slicer:

General Lee—68 days; dark green; gynoecious hybrid and disease-resistant.

Dasher II—70 days, spring only; dark green; gynoecious hybrid and disease-resistant.

Thunder—68 days; dark green; gynoecious hybrid and disease-resistant.

## Optimum Planting Dates

Zone	Spring	Fall
Coastal Counties	Feb. 15 - Apr. 20	Aug. 28 - Sept. 14
South Central	Mar. 15 - May 1	Aug. 14 - Aug. 28
Central	Apr. 1 - May 10	Aug. 7 - Aug. 21
North Central	Apr. 5 - May 10	Aug. 1 - Aug. 14
North	Apr. 10 - May 15	July 25 - Aug. 10

Cucumbers planted outside of these dates will require more management for pest control and irrigation.

## Spacing

Plant on ridged row when temperatures reach 60 °F. Space 42 to 60 inches between rows. Sow

seed 1 inch deep in the spring and 1 ½ inches deep in the fall. Space seeds 8 to 12 inches within the row.

## Seed Rate

Plant between 7,000 to 10,000 seeds per acre.

## Fertilizer

Apply according to soil test results. Apply lime 3 months before planting. If soil pH is below 5.5, apply 2 to 3 tons per acre.

## Irrigation

Cucumbers are particularly sensitive to drought. Irrigation can improve yields dramatically in medium or low rainfall years. When using sprinklers, irrigate in the early afternoon so you don't interfere with bee activity and so the leaves dry before dusk.

## Pollination

Cucumbers depend on bees to transfer pollen from male to female flowers. Do not disturb bee activity or kill bees with insecticides during flowering. One hive per acre is recommended.

## Weed Control

Always read the label and follow directions when using herbicides. Strategy is applied post-planting but prior to emergence. Apply Dacthal to a weed-free soil when vines begin to form. Poast can be used postemergence for grass control. Sandea is used for nutsedge control.

## Disease Control

Symptoms	Disease
Brown, angular-shaped spots on leaves.	Angular leafspot
Light brown, circular spots on leaves. Sunken lesions on stems and fruit.	Anthracnose
Entire plant wilts and dies.	Bacterial wilt
Yellow to brown spots on upper surface.	Downy mildew
Sunken, rotted spots where fruit contacts soil.	Fruit and belly rot
Large, dark brown, irregular spots on leaves. Stems ooze red or brown fluid.	Gummy stem blight
Water-soaked spots on leaves and fruit.	Scab

When disease has been identified, refer to Extension Publication 554 *Disease, Insect, and Nematode Control Recommendations for Commercial Vegetables in Mississippi* for control measures. Chlorotheloniol or Ridomil can be used for disease control. Reduce belly rot by spraying the row and soil surface with Chlorotheloniol after the last cultivation. Do not cultivate after this application. Belly rot pressure can be reduced by using plastic mulch.

## Nematodes

Cucumbers are extremely susceptible to root knot nematodes. See Extension Publication 554 for more details.

## Insect Control

Common insect problems are aphids, cabbage loopers, cutworms, pickleworms, spider mites, cucumber beetles, and squash bugs. In

spring cucumber crops, control the beetle populations. In fall, look out for pickleworms. Refer to Extension Publication 554 for control measures. Observe time limitations between spraying and harvesting.

## Harvesting

Pick clean 2 or 3 times a week. The more cucumbers you pick, the more the vines will produce. Harvest pickling cucumbers according to the size specified by the buyer. Deliver cucumbers the same day they are picked. Harvest slicer cucumber when enough fruits are a minimum length of 6 inches and a maximum diameter of 2 3/8 inches. Remove cucumbers from the field; package and cool as soon as practical.

## Storage

Cucumbers can be held 10 to 14 days at 50 °F to 55 °F in high humidity. They will suffer from chilling injury if held below 50 °F.

## Yield

Expect about 125 hundredweight per acre for pickle cucumbers and 250 bushels (48 pounds/bushel) per acre for slicers.

## Costs

	Slicers	Picklers
Preharvest	\$ 691	\$ 691
Harvest	760	600
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,451</b>	<b>\$ 1,291</b>

## Returns

The 5-year average F.O.B. price for medium-sized slicers (1 1/2 bushel) was \$8.10.

Picklers:

No. 1 size—\$15 per cwt

No. 2 size—\$8 per cwt

No. 3 size—\$4 per cwt

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The information given here is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended of other products that may also be suitable.

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