

South Dakota State University

# Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange

---

SDSU Extension Fact Sheets

SDSU Extension

---

1967

## Growing Pickling Cucumbers

Cooperative Extension South Dakota State University

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension\\_fact](https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_fact)

---

### Recommended Citation

South Dakota State University, Cooperative Extension, "Growing Pickling Cucumbers" (1967). *SDSU Extension Fact Sheets*. 1030.

[https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension\\_fact/1030](https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_fact/1030)

This Fact Sheet is brought to you for free and open access by the SDSU Extension at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in SDSU Extension Fact Sheets by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact [michael.biondo@sdstate.edu](mailto:michael.biondo@sdstate.edu).

# Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



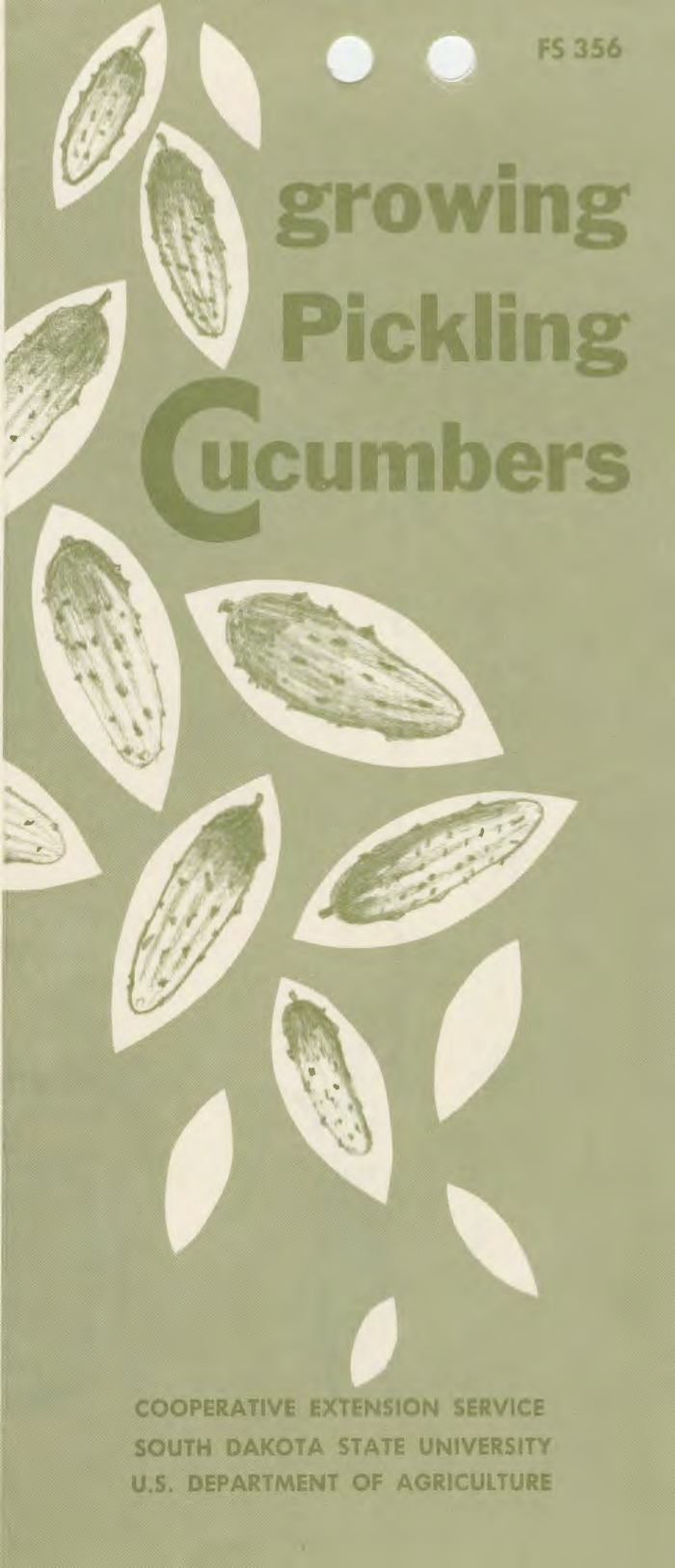
For current policies and practices, contact SDSU Extension

Website: [extension.sdstate.edu](http://extension.sdstate.edu)

Phone: 605-688-4792

Email: [sdsu.extension@sdstate.edu](mailto:sdsu.extension@sdstate.edu)

SDSU Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer in accordance with the nondiscrimination policies of South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Board of Regents and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The background of the cover is a light olive green color. It is decorated with several white, teardrop-shaped cutouts. Some of these cutouts contain detailed black and white illustrations of cucumber slices, showing the internal seeds and the outer skin with small bumps. Other cutouts are plain white, representing leaves. The illustrations are scattered across the page, with a higher concentration on the left side.

# growing Pickling Cucumbers

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# growing Pickling Cucumbers



By PAUL PRASHAR, Associate Professor of Horticulture  
and DEAN MARTIN, Extension Horticulturist

The cucumber is known botanically as *Cucumis sativus*. It is a warm-season crop that matures in 55 to 70 days depending on the variety and season.

## SITE AND SOIL PREFERENCE

Cucumbers can be grown on almost any good, well-drained soil, but sandy loams are preferred for commercial production. Avoid planting in low areas since soil in low spots warms slowly in the spring, and a soil temperature of 50 to 85 degrees F. is required for seed germination. A cold, wet period early in the season usually will result in low yields.

Build up the soil before planting by applying manure. Do not plant cucumbers in the same field in consecutive years. Crop rotation helps prevent disease. Use a three-year rotation which includes a deep legume crop such as alfalfa or clover.

If possible choose a site protected from wind. To insure wind protection plant a row of Sudangrass after every twelfth row of cucumbers, if possible skip a row on each side of the Sudangrass. Plant rows in an east-west direction whenever possible.



Figure 1. A single row of Sudangrass provides wind protection for cucumber planting.

## CULTURAL PRACTICES

Prepare soil thoroughly by plowing 8 to 10 inches deep early in the spring so that it will have time to settle well.

### Fertilizer

Good fertilizer practices are important. Low fertility results in low yields and deformed fruit.

1. Before preparing the soil apply 200 lbs. of 10-10-10 or 12-12-12 analysis fertilizer per acre as a broadcast application.
2. Apply 150 lbs. 6-24-24 analysis fertilizer at the time of planting or at the time of the first cultivation. This should be applied as a side dressing 2 to 3 inches from the row.

If needed apply a side dressing of 100 lbs. ammonium nitrate per acre at the time of the last cultivation. Yellowish-green foliage may be a symptom of nitrogen deficiency.

### Seed

Most processors either specify the variety to be grown or furnish the seed. Grow the variety the processor can use most advantageously and for which he pays the best price. Be sure to select a variety that is scab and mosaic resistant and treated for damping off. About two pounds of seed are needed per acre.

### Planting

The cucumber crop may be seeded at the end of May or as soon as danger of frost is past. Drill with a corn planter (40- to 42-inch rows)  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch deep, with seeds spaced 10 inches apart within the row. When the plants are well established they should be thinned to 20 to 30 inches within the row. On small plots plant in hills 40 inches apart with 4 to 5 seeds per hill; thin later to 2 plants per hill.

### Irrigation

Irrigation of cucumbers generally is not recommended in this area.

## PEST CONTROL

### Weeds

**Mechanical control** — Cultivate frequently from the time the plants emerge until vine growth makes cultivation impractical. Cultivation should be shallow. If necessary, use a hoe to remove weeds close to the plants. **Cultivate only when plant leaves are dry.**

**Chemical control**—Alanap-3, applied as a spray at the rate of 4 lbs. active ingredient in 40 gals. of water per acre immediately after the crop is seeded, will control most annual weeds that emerge with the crop.

### Disease

**Bacterial wilt**— An individual leaf wilts and becomes dull green. The bacteria spread rapidly and an entire plant or lateral stem may wilt and die. Juice from cut stems may be milky or sticky and stringy. Bacterial wilt is reduced by controlling the spotted and striped cucumber beetles which transmit the disease-causing bacteria. Early applications of methoxychlor or rotenone are necessary for beetle control. Start spraying for beetles as soon as plants germinate. Four to five applications may be required for com-

Table 1. Common Cucumber Insects and Control Measures

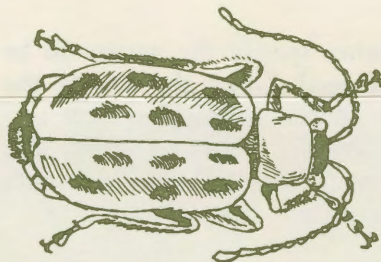
Insect	Description	Control insecticide, rate or dosage	Remarks and Precautions
Cutworm	Dull grey-brown, striped or spotted, stout soft-bodied caterpillars; will curl up tightly when disturbed. Adult is a grey-brown "miller" or moth.	1. Toxaphene—5% or 10% dust or 2 Tbs. of 60-65% emulsifiable concentrate in each gallon of transplant water. 2. DDT—1 lb. of 5% dust in 2 lbs. of bran bait.	1. Make soil application at planting time; do not apply after edible parts form. 2. Mix thoroughly and broadcast on soil, preferably before planting.



### Cucumber beetle

About 1/5" long, spotted beetle, yellow to dark green wing covers. Striped beetle about 1/5" long, yellow with 3 black stripes on the wing covers. Both species eat holes in leaves of young plants.

1. Carbaryl (Sevin)—Spray at the rate of 2 Tbs. of 50% or 4 tsp. of 80% wettable powder per gallon of water.
  2. Malathion—5% dust or Malathion 1 lb. per acre.
  3. Methoxychlor — 5%-10% dust or Methoxychlor 1½ lbs. per acre.
1. Do not use within 1 day of harvest.
  2. Do not use within 1 day of harvest.
  3. Do not use within 7 days of harvest.



plete control of the insects. Be sure to repeat every 7 to 12 days. Destroy wilted plants. **Read directions on the insecticide label carefully and follow instructions.**

#### POLLINATION

Bees help pollinate flowers for normal fruit development. Poor pollination results in misshapen fruits such as nubs and crooks. Dry weather and low soil fertility also can produce poor fruits. About one hive of bees is required for pollination of 3 to 4 acres of cucumbers. There are generally enough bees native to an area to pollinate small plots.

#### TRAINING VINES

When cucumber vines start to run, train them into rows for easier picking. Vines can be trained with a pitch fork or bars can be welded on cultivator shovels that will turn the vines into rows. If vines are not trained, picking will be difficult and much fruit may be missed.

#### HARVESTING

Harvest cucumbers every 2 to 3 days, depending on the weather. If moisture is not a limiting factor,

frequent picking will increase yields. Deliver cucumbers to the buying station as soon after picking as possible to reduce shrinkage loss. Haul cucumbers in wooden baskets or similar containers; do not use paper bags.

#### PICKLING GRADES

Table 2. Grade of Pickling Cucumbers as Usually Observed.

No.	Grade Diameter in inches	Approximate Price Paid* Per 100 lbs. in 1966 Season
1.	3/4" -----	\$6.00 to 8.00
2.	1" -----	\$4.00 to 6.00
3.	1 1/4" -----	\$3.00 to 4.00
4.	1 3/4" -----	\$1.00 to 2.00
5.	2 3/16" -----	.50 to 1.00
	Culls over 2 3/16" -----	.25

\*Price depends on supply, demand, and other factors.

#### LABOR REQUIREMENTS

Preharvest labor for cucumber production requires about 16 hours per acre of man power and 7 hours of machine power. Harvesting labor requires about 100 hours per acre of man power and 13 hours of machine power.

Use of a trade name does not imply endorsement of one product over another.

EXTENSION SERVICE  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
BROOKINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA

Postage and Fees Paid  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

5M-3-67-5780



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# growing Pickling Cucumbers