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Texas A&M conducts cantaloupe, honeydew research

By [Kate Walz \(/users/kwalz\)](#) February 21, 2017 | 9:59 pm EST



To understand changes in the melon industry — cantaloupe (<http://ow.ly/Vj60305wkt0>), honeydew and other varieties, but not watermelon — Texas A&M University is conducting a survey to gather information about all aspects of the industry.

The goal is to establish the needs and perceptions of melon stakeholders — consumers, producers and retailers, according to Bhimu Patil, director of the Vegetable and Fruit Improvement Center at Texas A&M

and the project's director.

"The outcome will help to develop new cultivars and varieties to make sure our research and outreach efforts will focus on the stakeholder needs and re-establish melon industry by developing domestic grown region-specific cultivars," said Patil.

The center conducted similar surveys in 2009 and 2011. This year's survey will help researchers understand if there are any changes in stakeholder needs concerning the melons, he said.

The survey will also shed light on changes in demands at all levels of the production chain.

"This year's survey will help us to understand any changes in consumer, melon producer, retailer, national associations (such as the Produce Marketing Association, United Fresh Produce Association) needs," Patil said. "Previous surveys provided strong evidence of developing flavorful, safer, healthy melons with disease resistance."

Patil asks that all members of the melon industry, consumers, producers and retailers take the survey before the cutoff date of Feb. 23.

The survey, which is anonymous, takes about 8-10 minutes to complete, and is available at this [website \(https://tamucehd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1YBuufvEuOwmciF\)](https://tamucehd.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1YBuufvEuOwmciF).

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Kate Walz began as a journalist at her junior college newspaper. She earned a bachelor's degree in mass communication from MidAmerica Nazarene University and started a career in television — producing documentary and reality television shows before moving to local news. She worked in digital marketing while pursuing her master's degree from the University of Central Missouri, where she taught public speaking before returning to journalism at The Packer.

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