

RESEARCH REPORT 2025

Project Title: Processing Cucumber Variety Evaluation

Prepared for: Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers,
Ontario Cucumber Research Committee

Research Location: Ontario Crops Research Centre - Simcoe
Department of Plant Agriculture, University of Guelph
1283 Blueline Rd, Simcoe, ON

Research Team: Principal Investigator: Rene Van Acker
Research Technician(s): Rachel Riddle and Lisa Weber

Objective: The objectives of these studies were to evaluate new cucumber varieties for yield performance, quality, adaptability and acceptability to North American processors for handpick and machine harvest applications. New superior yielding cucumber varieties are required to ensure that the industry can compete effectively. New varieties are being introduced by seed companies each year, therefore, variety evaluation is essential in order to recommend the best varieties to the industry, in particular, varieties that have local adaptability and market acceptance, together with higher yields, improved fresh quality, improved brining quality and better disease tolerance are needed.

Methodology: Three cucumber variety trials were conducted at the Ontario Crops Research Centre located in Simcoe, Ontario, in 2025: (1) Parthenocarpic Hand Harvest (multi-pick), (2) Conventional Machine Harvest (simulated once-over harvest) and (3) Parthenocarpic Machine Harvest (simulated once-over harvest).

Processing cucumber varieties were evaluated to compare how they perform under the same environmental conditions. Trials were set up as a randomized complete block design with three replications for the hand harvest trial and four replications for machine harvest trials. Commercial and experimental varieties were evaluated in all trials. Experimental varieties are not included in this report.

Hand Harvest Trials

The parthenocarpic multi-pick variety trial included 9 commercial varieties for evaluation. The trial was seeded on June 3 using a standard cone seeder mounted on a John Deere planter. The plot size of the trials was 1.5 m (5 ft.) x 6 m (20 ft.). Plants were thinned to 15 cm (6") in row, giving a target plant population of 18,000 plants/acre. Cucumber plots were harvested two times per week, for 10 harvests from July 14 to August 14.

Machine Harvest Trials

The conventional and parthenocarpic machine harvest trials both included 6 commercial varieties for evaluation. Trials were seeded on June 25 and June 11 for the conventional and parth machine harvest trials, respectively, using a standard cone seeder. The plot size for these trials was 0.75 m (2.5 ft.) x 6 m (20 ft.). Plants were thinned to 10 cm (4") and 20 cm (8") for the conventional and parth trials, respectively, giving a plant population of 55,000 and 28,000 plants/acre. Cucumber plots were harvested as a simulated once-over destructive pick, where

plants were pulled by hand, and all cucumbers harvested into bushels down to a 1A/B size. Varieties were harvested to target correct maturity and thus harvest date is dependent on the variety. For the conventional machine trial, the harvest day for varieties in this report was August 12 (48 DTH). For the parth machine trial, the harvest days were July 25 (44 DTH), July 29 (48 DTH) and August 1 (51 DTH).

For all trials, the crop was grown according to accepted commercial practices used in Ontario. Data was taken on fruit length to diameter ratios (LD) on a weekly basis for hand harvest and once for machine harvest. Yields were measured at harvest as fruit weights (ton/acre), graded out by size and dollar value per acre. Evaluations on fresh internal quality and bitterness were taken after grading. Selected varieties from all trials were brined at Simcoe, for evaluation by the industry October 2. LD, fresh internal, bitterness and brine data are not shown in this report, however is available on request.

Results:

Yields shown are for each graded size and a total yield which includes grades #1 to #4 for hand harvest, and grades #1 to oversize (OS) for machine harvest, (including nubs and crooks) in ton/acre, US \$/acre and a percent breakout by graded size. Please note that yields are for comparative purposes only. Small plots yields may not accurately reflect commercial yields.

Parthenocarpic Hand Harvest (multi-pick): Speed, Wolfgang, Abago and Amarok were the highest yielding varieties with approximately US \$19,300, \$17,100, \$16,300 and \$16,100 per acre and 41.3, 38.3, 41.8 and 33.6 tons per acre, respectively. Most varieties were in the US \$16,000 to \$15,000 and 36-39 t/acre range (Table 1).

Conventional Machine Harvest: Chaperon and Akropolis were the highest yielding varieties with approximately yield of US \$2,900 and \$2,500 per acre and 13.3 and 10.2 tons/acre, respectively. (Table 2).

Parthenocarpic Machine Harvest: Gershwin and Springsteen were the highest yielding varieties with approximately US \$6,000 per acre and 27.6 and 26.7 tons/acre, respectively. Most varieties were in the US \$4,000 - \$3,000 per acre range (Table 3).

Table 1: Yield of cucumbers harvested from the parthenocarpic hand harvest (multi-pick) variety trial, Simcoe, ON, 2025.

Variety	Source	Total Yield			Percent Breakout								
		1-4, NC		Fruit/ Plant	by weight								
		t/ac	\$/ac		N/C	1AB	2A	2B	3A	3B	4	O/S	
Speed	Nunhems	41.3 a	19,297 a	40	6	20	34	26	10	3	0	0	
Wolfgang	Rijk Zwaan	38.3 a	17,066 ab	36	5	16	33	33	10	2	0	0	
Abago	Bejo	41.8 a	16,329 ab	33	7	12	23	32	17	7	1	1	
Amarok	Bejo	33.6 a	16,140 ab	36	5	20	37	27	7	2	1	1	
Aristan	Bejo	36.9 a	15,817 ab	31	6	15	32	29	12	6	0	0	
Lennon	Rijk Zwaan	39.2 a	15,499 ab	32	7	12	27	35	12	6	1	1	
Merengue	Seminis	36.0 a	15,050 ab	33	7	13	32	36	9	2	0	0	
Liszt	Rijk Zwaan	37.2 a	14,382 ab	29	4	10	22	39	16	6	2	2	
Absolut	Bejo	35.4 a	13,564 b	28	7	10	27	34	12	6	2	2	
Soil Type	: Very fine sandy loam		Fertility	: 100 lbs/ac of N									
Soil pH; % OM	: 6.8; 1.8			: 70 lbs/ac of P									
Planting Date	: June 3			: 100 lbs/ac of K									
Row Spacing	: 5'		Herbicide	: Command 0.4 L/acre PRE									
Plant Spacing	: 6"		Harvest Dates	: July 14 - August 14 (10 total)									

Means followed by same letter do not significantly differ (P=.05, Tukey's HSD)

* Yields are for comparative purposes only. Small plot yields may not accurately reflect commercial yields.

Table 2: Yield of cucumbers harvested from the conventional machine harvest (simulated once-over harvest) variety trial, Simcoe, ON, 2025.

Variety	Source	Total Yield			Percent Breakout							
		1-OS, NC		Fruit/	by weight							
		t/ac	\$/ac	Plant	N/C	1AB	2A	2B	3A	3B	4	O/S
Chaperon	Seminis	13.3 a	2,894 a	2.1	4	0	3	6	26	48	9	5
Akropolis	Bejo	10.2 a	2,470 a	2.1	2	0	2	14	38	37	6	1
Expedition	Seminis	12.4 a	2,430 a	1.7	5	0	1	3	23	46	9	12
Stronghold	Seminis	13.1 a	2,377 a	1.7	4	0	2	5	18	41	15	14
Vlaspik	Seminis	11.6 a	2,361 a	1.9	6	1	3	7	28	38	11	6
Journey	Seminis	11.1 a	2,272 a	2.0	6	1	2	7	28	38	13	5
Soil Type : Fine sandy loam Fertility : 100 lbs/ac of N												
Soil pH; % OM : 6.7; 1.5 : 70 lbs/ac of P												
Planting Date : June 26 : 100 lbs/ac of K												
Row Spacing : 30" Herbicides : Command 0.4 L/acre PRE												
Plant Spacing : 4" Harvest Date : Aug 12 (48 DTH)												

Means followed by same letter do not significantly differ (P=.05, Tukey's HSD)

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Table 3: Yield of cucumbers harvested from the parthenocarpic machine harvest (simulated once-over harvest) variety trial, Simcoe, ON, 2025.

Variety	Source	Total Yield		Fruit/ Plant	Days to Harvest	Percent Breakout							
		1-OS, NC t/ac	\$/ac			by weight							
						N/C	1AB	2A	2B	3A	3B	4	O/S
Gershwin	Rijk Zwaan	27.6 a	6,061 a	6.7	51	3	0	0	10	37	33	10	6
Springsteen	Rijk Zwaan	26.7 ab	6,031 a	6.8	48	3	0	1	18	30	35	9	5
Henley	Rijk Zwaan	20.0 ab	4,622 ab	4.3	44	2	0	0	2	34	51	8	3
NUN 5062	Nunhems	21.9 ab	4,593 ab	5.5	48	2	0	2	10	23	43	15	5
NUN 5063	Nunhems	22.0 ab	3,801 b	3.9	48	2	0	0	2	13	47	26	9
V 5016	Nunhems	15.2 b	3,355 b	3.3	44	3	1	1	8	23	53	9	2
Soil Type	: Very fine sandy loam		Fertility	: 100 lbs/ac of N									
Soil pH; % OM	: 6.1; 1.8			: 70 lbs/ac of P									
Planting Date	: June 11			: 100 lbs/ac of K									
Row Spacing	: 30"		Herbicides	: Command 0.4 L/acre PRE									
Plant Spacing	: 8"		Harvest Dates	: July 25 (44 DTH), July 29 (48 DTH), Aug 1 (51 DTH)									

Means followed by same letter do not significantly differ (P=.05, Tukey's HSD)

* Yields are for comparative purposes only. Small plot yields may not accurately reflect commercial yields.