Gary Crawford: [00:00:00] And know our subject today watermelons or as our expert Laura Popielski sometimes says.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:06] Water Mel-lon!

Gary Crawford: [00:00:06] And we'll bring you a ton of songs about them and they're all terrible. Right?

Laura Popielski: [00:00:10] I agree.

Gary Crawford: [00:00:10] So here we go.

[00:00:12] "Songs about Watermelons overlap"

Gary Crawford: [00:00:31] Whoa yeah. So he goes over and over and over again. The songs just don't do justice to this great food. We're here at the VegUcation at the Department of Agriculture's Farmers Market in Washington D.C. to try to reverse the damage those songs have done. First Laura says aside from being delicious watermelons have a lot of good stuff like water and potassium vitamin C and A heavy charge of lycopene. That's anti-oxidant. Now Laura we're going to wade into some dangerous waters here as to how to tell if a whole watermelon is ripe and ready. Some people say the only sure way is to you know cut into it but you can't do that of course before you buy it. So what do you do?

Laura Popielski: [00:01:11] Some people like to give it a good tap. And if it sounds hollow.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:15] Then that means it's ready to go. That was actually my head. Now many of us buy watermelon already cut up. Any advice there since the thumping method could get messy in that case.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:25] The biggest cut up pieces you can when they're cut up in smaller parts. They don't last as well in your fridge. The more you cut it up the more watery it's going to get you're breaking more of the cell walls.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:36] And if the pieces are in one of those clear clamshells.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:39] Look at the bottom make sure there's not a whole lot of liquid down there. If so you're buying a lot of watermelon soup. Try to find one a little more dry.

Gary Crawford: [00:01:46] Which would have meant that they've been cut more recently.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:49] Definitely.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:50] Speaking of cuts a lot of people get some nasty cuts when they try to cut a whole watermelon that's rolling whole over the counter so how do we "counter" that.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:57] Best way to do that is to cut the top and the bottom just a little bit of the ends off first because then it won't roll around as much. And then you can cut it in half flip that cut side down on your countertop.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:07] And that stabilizes it. You're showing folks here that you need to cut
Laura Popielski: [00:02:12] And if you talk with your hands put the knife down first.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:15] Good. Best idea I've heard yet. Oh Laura I've got to ask about the storage of watermelons. If I buy a whole one I don't cut it up it won't fit in the fridge. How long can I keep it before it loses it?

Laura Popielski: [00:02:24] You can keep it on your countertop uncut for about a week. But if you do cut it up you want to get that in the refrigerator and it's going to last about four days.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:32] Unfortunately we don't have four days to talk about watermelons we're out of time but Laura has agreed she's going to come back next time talk about how to eat watermelon. I usually use my mouth.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:41] You should probably ingest watermelon through your mouth. I agree. But there are so many different ways to eat watermelon besides just eating it cut up as is.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:49] She's a bit of a cut herself.

Gary Crawford: [00:02:51] Also next time we're going to get into the seedy sex life of the two watermelon.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:55] OH!

Gary Crawford: [00:02:56] Gary Crawford reporting for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.