

## **Watermelon production in Africa: challenges and opportunities**

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### **Abstract**

There is a growing realization in African countries for the need to enhance the production of xerophytic crops, including Watermelon, *Citrullus lanatus* L., in the face of climate change. The objective of this review is to explore challenges and opportunities in watermelon production in Africa. Watermelon is adaptable to most of tropical, and subtropical, Africa, due to its low water requirement and has the potential to be a commercial crop. However, minimal research has been applied to its breeding and production in the continent. Lack of improved varieties, poor production systems, perishable nature of the fruit, and lack of harvest and post-harvest preservation technology hamper large-scale production. Research, particularly in watermelon production practices and breeding, is needed if its true potential in Africa is to be realized.

**Keywords:** *Citrullus lanatus*, cucurbit, lycopene, xerophyte