Growing Strawberries in a Community Garden

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Strawberry Botany

- Not a true berry
- An aggregate fruit
- Enlarged flower receptacle
- Achenes on outside of fruit
- Ovaries of the flower with a seed inside
Small Fruit Site Selection

- Full sun
- Well-drained soil
- Good air drainage
- Away from trees & shrubs
- Perennial crop
Strawberry Types

- June-Bearers (short day types) (*Fragaria × ananassa*)
  - spring crop only
- Day-Neutrals (not sensitive to day length) (*Fragaria x ananassa*)
  - spring and fall crop
  - stop in heat of summer
- Other novelty types
  - Musk strawberry (*Fragaria moschata*)
  - Alpine strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*)
  - Ornamental types
    - ‘Pink Panda’ (*Fragaria X Comarum*)
June Bearing Strawberry Production Calendar

• Year 1
  – plant early spring March/April
  – remove flowers and encourage plants to form a bed
  – over winter mulch late Nov to December

• Year 2
  – remove winter mulch
  – harvest May to July
  – renovate July

• Year 3, 4, etc.
  – harvest May to July
  – renovate July
Strawberry Soil Preparation

• Soil test
• Adjust pH to 6.0 to 6.5
  – lime
• Add amendments
  – compost, well rotted manure
• Add fertilizer
  – ex. 2 lbs /100 sq ft 5-10-10 or 10-10-10
The Strawberry Plant
Proper Strawberry Planting

- **A**: Correct depth
- **B**: Too deep
- **C**: Too shallow
- **D**: Planting hole too shallow
Dormant Strawberry Plant
Strawberry Spacing

- Junebearers 24”-36” apart
- Day-neutrals 12”-24” apart
- 4’ between rows
Strawberry Establishment

• Keep well watered
• Control weeds
• Remove flowers
  – 1st year for Junebearers
  – 6 weeks for day-neutrals
Mother Strawberry Plant With Runners
Strawberry Matted Row
Overwintering Strawberries

- Apply 4” clean straw just before ground freezes
- rake straw into rows in early spring when new growth begins
Overwintering Strawberries
Harvest in second year
Old Crowns With Winter Injury

Healthy Young Crown
Strawberry Renovation

• Mow or trim off leaves
• Narrow rows to 12”
  – remove or till older plants
• Fertilize 2 lbs/100 sq ft 5-10-10
Renovated Strawberry Bed
Strawberry Cultivar Selection

• Disease resistance
  – Red Stele
  – Verticillium wilt –
    • also avoid planting where tomatoes, peppers, etc. were grown

• Certified (virus indexed) plants
# Strawberry Varieties: Spring-bearing

Harvest season ~ late May to early July

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Early Season</th>
<th>Midseason</th>
<th>Late Season</th>
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<tr>
<td>‘Earliglow’</td>
<td>‘Allstar’</td>
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<td>‘Raritan’</td>
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<td>‘Cavendish’</td>
<td>‘Darrow’</td>
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<td>‘AC Wendy’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>‘Cabot’</td>
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<td>Rutgers Scarlet™</td>
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Rutgers Scarlet™
Day Neutral Strawberry Production Calendar

- **Year 1**
  - plant early spring March/April
  - remove flowers for 6 weeks
  - encourage plants to form a bed
  - harvest late summer fall
  - over winter mulch late Nov to December

- **Year 2**
  - remove winter mulch
  - harvest May to July
  - renovate July?

- **Year 3, 4, etc.?**
Strawberries Varieties: Day-Neutral

Harvest Seasons
  mid-June to mid-July & early August to mid-Sept

  ‘Albion’
  ‘Tribute’
  ‘Tristar’
  ‘Seascape’
‘Tribute’ Day Neutral Strawberry
Alpine Strawberry
Alpine Strawberry
White Grub Damage

- Control
  - Beneficial nematodes?
Other Novelty Strawberry types

- musk strawberry
- ‘Pink Panda’
- ‘Mara Des Bois’
- Pineberry
False Strawberry or Mock Strawberry

- *Duchesnea indica*
- Yellow flowers
- Native to Asia
- Red achenes
- Edible but very little flavor
Gray Mold Disease
Strawberry Gray Mold / Leather Rot Control

- Narrow rows
- Raised beds
- Avoid splashing
  - mulch beds
  - mulch between rows

- Sanitation
  - keep berries picked
  - remove dead leaves in spring and at renovation

- Fungicide – Captan
Weedy Strawberries
Perennial Weeds in Strawberry
Weed Control in Strawberries

- Cultivate or hoe
- Mulch
- Handweed
- Herbicides
  - Corn gluten meal
    (ex. Preen Organic)
  - the year before planting
Frost Control in Strawberries

- Apply floating rowcovers in late afternoon when frost threatens
- Remove next morning to allow bee/insect pollination
Floating Rowcovers
Strawberry Harvest

- Avg. yield 1-2 lbs / plant
- Harvest often
- Handle carefully
- Refrigerate immediately
Additional Resources

website:  [www.njaes.rutgers.edu](http://www.njaes.rutgers.edu)

- FS097 Growing Strawberries in the Home Garden

Partial list of seed and plants

- Nourse Farms, Inc.
  - [https://www.noursefarms.com/](https://www.noursefarms.com/)

- The Strawberry Store
  - [https://thestrawberrystore.com/](https://thestrawberrystore.com/)

- Raintree Nursery
  - [https://raintreenursery.com/](https://raintreenursery.com/)