



RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station

# Growing Strawberries in a Community Garden

Peter Nitzsche

County Agent

Cooperative Extension of Morris County

# 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 x 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*)



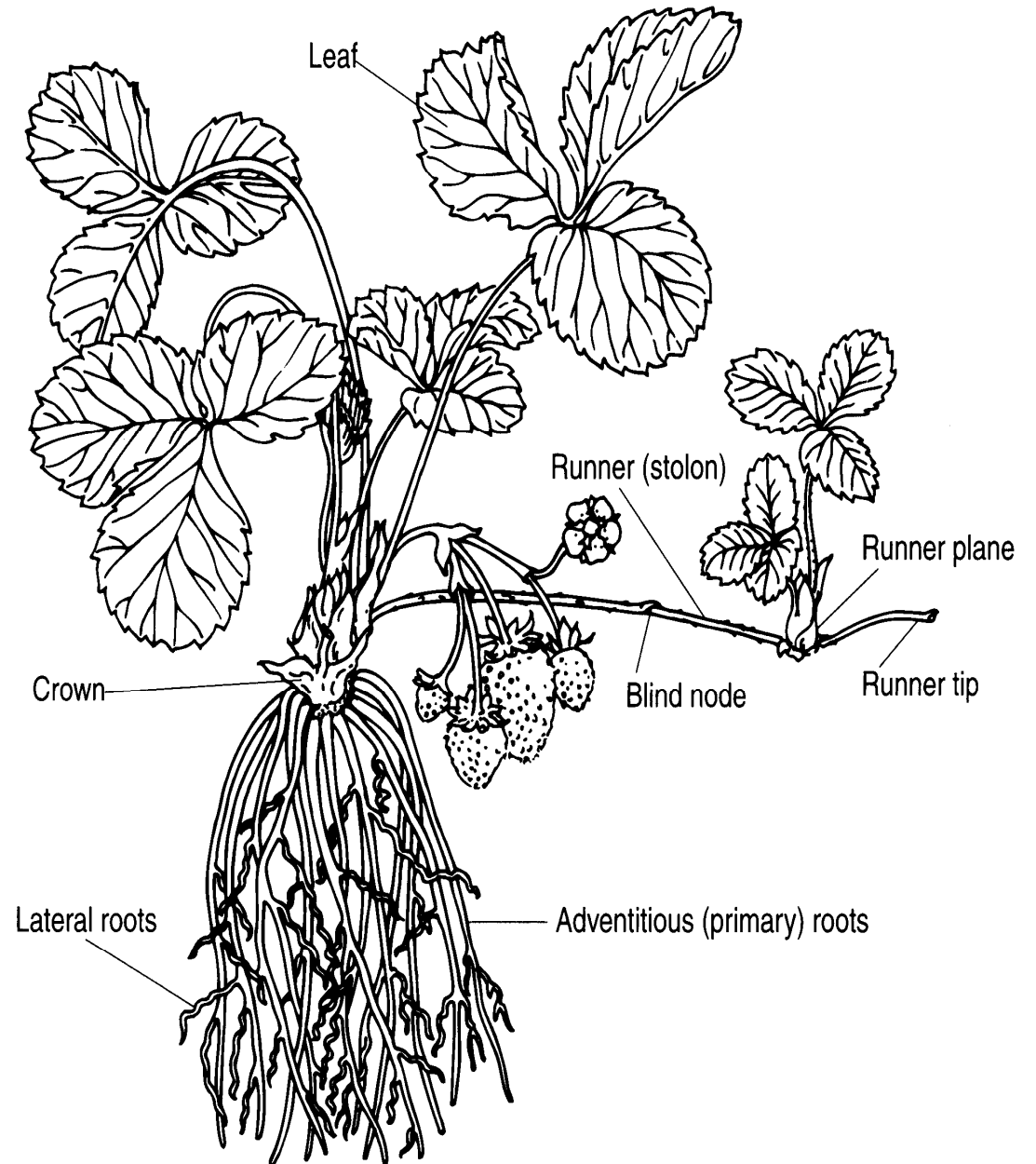
# June Bearing Strawberry Production Calendar

- 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

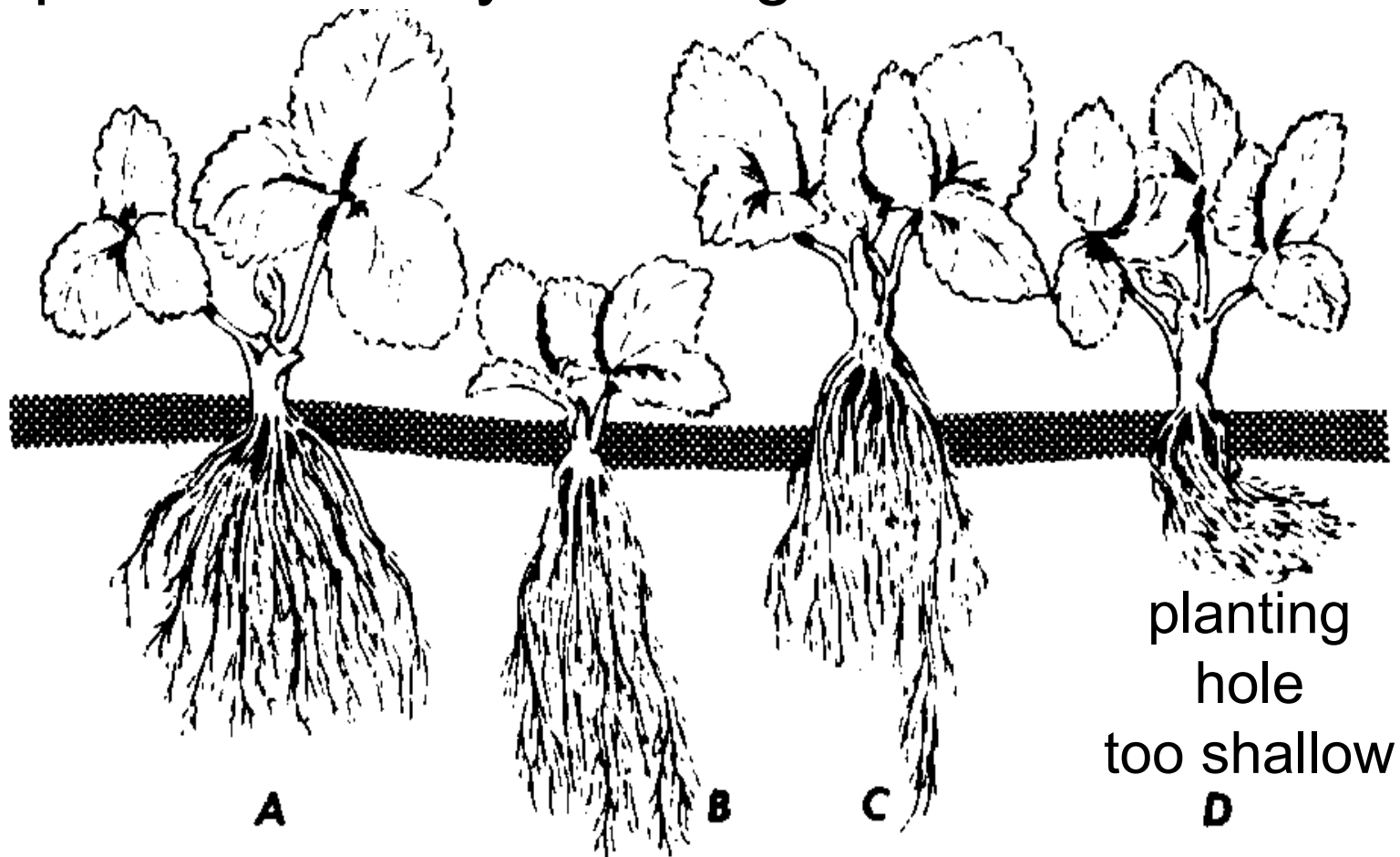
- Soil test
- Adjust pH to 6.0 to 6.5
  - lime
- Add amendments
  - compost, well rotted manure
- Add fertilizer
  - ex. 2 lbs /100 sq ft 5-10-10 or 10-10-10

# The Strawberry Plant





# Proper Strawberry Planting



correct depth

too deep

too  
shallow

planting  
hole  
too shallow

**NRAES**



# 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





# Strawberry Ribbon 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

## Early Season

‘Earliglow’  
‘Northeaster’  
‘Cavendish’  
‘AC Wendy’

## Midseason

‘Allstar’  
‘Raritan’  
‘Darrow’  
‘Darselect’  
‘Cabot’  
Rutgers Scarlet™

## Late Season

‘Sparkle’  
‘Lateglow’  
‘Latestar’  
‘Ovation’



# 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





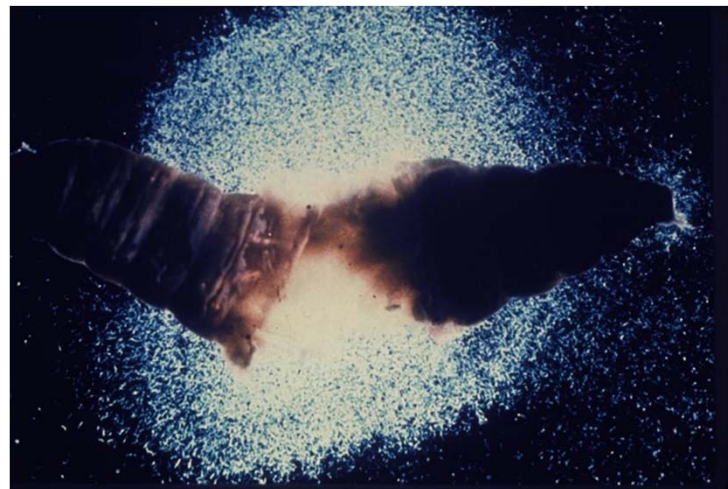
# Alpine Strawberry



# White Grub Damage



- Control
  - Beneficial nematodes?





## Other Novelty Strawberry types



## 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/>
- The Strawberry Store
  - <https://thestrawberrystore.com/>
- Raintree Nursery
  - <https://raintreenursery.com/>