

# June-Bearing Strawberries

Strawberries are a popular small fruit crop that can be rather easily grown in this area. Always plant virus-free plants. Avoid the temptation of getting plants out of someone's patch. Strawberries will generally get virus in about 5-10 years. Plants with virus will show no visible signs – they will look healthy and will grow, but the production drops drastically along with the berry size. We recommend replanting with new virus-free plants every 5-7 years.

## Planting & First Year Care:

- **Planting depth is important.**
- Plant spacing in the row should be 18" apart with 4-5' between rows
- Blossoms should be picked the first season to get better plant growth
- Once they start sending out runners, fertilize with 1 pound nitrogen per 1,000 sq feet (similar to lawn fertilizing)
- September 1st: Fertilize again with 1# nitrogen per 1,000 sq feet for blossom set.
  - This is a very important time to keep watered - it's when blossom set occurs for next year's crop

## Continuing Care:

- Strawberries should be mulched for winter protection.
  - Mulch when night temperatures are consistently in the 15°-20°F range.
  - Mulch with a several inch-deep layer of organic mulch (such as straw).
- In the spring, watch to make sure the plants are coming through the mulch
  - If not, rake back or loosen the mulch over the row
  - However, you want to leave as much on as possible as this mulch will keep you and your berries out of the mud during harvest
- Strawberries should be sprayed every 5-7 days during bloom time to prevent the tarnish plant bug which causes the seedy ends on the berries.
- After harvest is done:
  - Fertilize again with 1 pound nitrogen per 1,000 sq feet
  - Renovate by tilling through the patch, leaving about a 6-8" wide row of plants
    - It is very important to thin the patch to maintain good berry size
- On September 1st, fertilize again with 1# nitrogen per 1,000 sq feet for next year's blossom set

There are many varieties available. We offer the June bearing variety Honeoye. We had excellent experience with Honeoye – it is a large, firm berry that holds up its size well, is hardy, and has good plant vigor.

