



STRAWBERRY

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INTRODUCTION

Strawberries are by far one of the most popular, easiest to grow and most rewarding of the berries. In our effort to sell the most trouble-free, productive plants, we are now offering the same plants that commercial growers buy. Our plants are one generation from a tissue cultured mother plant insuring you the most disease free start to your strawberry bed. These plants produce 3-4 times better than the usual backyard strawberry, yielding up to one quart per plant.

USES IN THE LANDSCAPE

Strawberries can be planted as a fruitful border or grown under fruit trees for a lush fruiting bed. Incorporate the beautiful rosettes in the flowerbed, since your flowers like the same conditions that strawberries do. Remember that the beautiful white flowers are followed by red fruit, so work those colors into your plan. No room in the yard? Strawberries are fruitful and beautiful when grown in containers.

PLANTING AND CULTURE

SITE SELECTION

Well-drained, sandy, rich soils are preferred. Strawberries do not tolerate flooding. Plants will grow more vigorously and produce more fruit in full sun.

SOIL PREPARATION, FERTILIZATION AND PLANTING

Strawberries in the Deep South are best grown as annuals, because over time the plants will pick up fungal and viral diseases. Use new beds each year, replacing spent plants with the flower or vegetable of your choice. If you wish to keep your plants for more than one season, lift the plants in September, choosing the largest of the new offsets, and transfer them to new beds. Replace them all when the yield declines or when the plants appear diseased. Strawberry prefers slightly acid soil (pH 5.5-6.5), but soils of up to moderate alkalinity are readily tolerated. If you are in doubt about the acidity of your soil, take a soil sample to the Cooperative Extension Agent in your county for a soil test.

Bed preparation is crucial for a successful strawberry patch. Enrich the entire bed, 2 feet wide and the length of row, with aged manure or mushroom compost roto-tilled in. If creating a raised bed, use half manure/mushroom compost and half potting soil. Make sure your raised bed is 10-12 inches deep.

The type of fertilizer you choose may be chemical or organic. Make sure that the fertilizer contains iron, zinc, manganese, magnesium, molybdenum, copper and boron. These minor elements are very important to plants and most soils are low in these elements. Fertilize the bed before planting with either 5lbs of 10-10-10 or 10lbs of Espoma Garden Tone for every 100 square feet of bed. Make rows of mounded, enriched soil approximately two feet wide. Then finish as follows (see chart below).

10-10-10 or 10-0-10 with minerals	Apply additional 5lbs per 100 square feet of bed should be banded down the row center
Espoma Garden Tone (Organic)	Apply additional 10lbs per 100 square feet of bed should be banded down the row center

Wet the bed immediately before planting. Beds may be mulched with black plastic film or organic mulches (hay, pine straw or leaves). Black plastic keeps the soil warmer for early fruiting, but make sure water can penetrate to the plant's roots.

For bare root crowns, it is very important to keep plants roots damp until planting. Strawberry plants are easily lost by planting too deep. Set the plant with the crown just above the soil and the roots just barely covered. Water thoroughly to settle the roots and eliminate air pockets. Plant the crowns in pairs, putting one crown on each side of the fertilizer band approximately one foot apart. Space crowns 12 inches apart in the row. Strawberries should be watered with an overhead sprinkler throughout the day (preferably constantly) for the first week after they are set out. Do not be distressed when the leaves on your new plant die in the first week or two. New leaves produced by the crown will quickly grow to produce delicious berries.

When planting plugs or potted strawberry plants, remove the plant from the pot and place at the same level at which it grew in its pot. Fill the hole with the mix of soil and gently tamp it in. Water thoroughly to settle the roots and eliminate air pockets.

Container gardeners can easily grow barrels or pots of strawberries. Just use good potting soil, water regularly and apply a balanced fertilizer meant for containers.

Strawberries benefit from applications of liquid fertilizer through out their lives. Use fish emulsion, or teas made from aged manure or homemade compost to insure heavier fruiting.

WATER

The first week is a critical time for the establishment of a new **bare root** strawberry. Water with an overhead sprinkler daily (preferably constantly) for the first week after they are set out. **Container or plug plants** need to be watered once a day until established. After plants are established, water thoroughly (45-60 minutes) twice a week on light soils and once a week on clay soils. Soak the entire root system deeply.

VARIETY LIST- ALL STRAWBERRIES ARE SELF POLLINATING.

SWEET CHARLIE This University of Florida developed strawberry lives up to its name by being intensely sweet. Vigorous grower and disease resistant, Sweet Charlie will fruit during the spring and early summer.

CAMEROSA Larger and firmer than sweet Charlie. Deep red with a sweet rich flavor, widely adapted and produces over an extended period.