Strawberries for the Home Garden

Dr. Bernadine Strik, Professor of Horticulture
Extension Berry Crops Specialist
Oregon State University

Native strawberries

- **Fragaria chiloensis** (beach strawberry)
- **Fragaria vesca** (woods strawberry)
- **Fragaria virginiana** (mountain strawberry)

Terminology:
- **Crown**: short compressed stem -- has a whorl of leaves and produces trusses and runners
- **Truss**: Cap
- **Runner**: "seeds" are called achenes
- **Mother plant**: daughter
- **Crown**: short compressed stem
- **Crown**: short compressed stem
- **Mother plant**: daughter
- **New strawberry planting**

There are 3 types of strawberries:

**June-bearers**:
- Crop once/year (in June)
- Produce many runners

**Day-neutrals**:
- Better than ever-bearers
- Produce fruit continuously May through October
- Produce few runners

**Everbearers**:
- Produce fruit twice/yr June & August
- Produce few runners

Publication:
- "Strawberry Cultivars for Western Oregon & Washington"
- http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/

Cultivars:
- **June-bearers**
  - Hood
  - Shuksan
  - Puget Reliance
- **Everbearers**
  - Benton
  - Toltim
New cultivars to watch for:
June-bearers
- Sweet Sunrise
- Puget Crimson
- Charm

Sweet Bliss

Cultivars (E. Oregon):
June-bearers
- Fresh market cultivars adapted to zones 3-8 or 5-8, depending on cultivar:
  - ‘Earlglow’ (early, small size, excellent flavor)
  - ‘Annapolis’ (early, maintains size, good flavor)
  - ‘Cavendish’ (very large, good flavor)
  - ‘Honeoye’ (week later, large, good flavor)
  - ‘Allstar’ (very large, excellent flavor)

Puget Crimson

Moore Charm

Photos: courtesy Nourse Farms

Cultivars (E. Oregon):
June-bearers
- ‘Darselect’ (large, excellent flavor)
- ‘Clancy’ (+5 days, large, dark red, good flavor)
- ‘Lateglow’ (+9 days, large, excellent flavor)
- ‘Jewel’ (+10 days, large, excellent flavor)
- ‘Ac Valley Sunset’ (+~10 days, good flavor)

Darselect Clancy Jewel Ac Valley Sunset

Photos: courtesy Nourse Farms

Day-neutral cultivars
- Continuous ripening (breaks in hot temperatures)
- Albion
- Seascape
- Monterey
- San Andreas

Photos: courtesy Nourse Farms

Know the cultivar you are buying!

Planting
- Most plants are available in spring (order early from mail order catalogues)
- Do not add fertilizer to the planting hole
- Grow berries with similar needs in your yard plot or a larger raised bed

Fred Meyer, Bend, Oregon (plants)
Plant type

- Bare root (here in flats)
- In small pots

Plant in the spring

- Proper planting depth is very important
- Make sure roots are not exposed and growing point is not buried
- Check plants after watering them in

Planting – no need to trim roots unless very long:

Planting – insert roots straight down into hole:

Planting – ensure proper depth:

Planting – for potted plants; rough up roots:
Placing – remove flowers to improve growth:
Just do once

Growth:

Planting Systems in your yard:
Plants can be established on flat ground but raised beds are recommended

A well-drained soil with a neutral pH, pest-free, sunny site is recommended

Planting Systems in yard – June-bearers
“Matted Row” (they runner a lot)

• 15” in the row; 3-4’ between rows
• runners root
• Rows will form a “mat”

Planting Year
Mature matted row

Planting Year

Maintaining matted rows
Runners will grow to fill in aisles
• Rake early-formed runners into the row
• Till or hoe to maintain aisles

Planting Systems in yard – June-bearers
“Matted Row”

To encourage growth & runnering
• Irrigate well
• Remove weeds
• Fertilize frequently with small amounts of nitrogen fertilizer

Planting Year
Strawberry plantings

- Planting -- "year 1"
- "First fruiting season" -- "year 2"
- "Second fruiting season" -- "year 3"
- "Third fruiting season" -- "year 4"
- Planting removed after harvest

Yield and fruit size decrease as plantings age

Renovation – only done in June-bearers

Done 2 weeks after last harvest

- "Tired" plants after harvest in July
- Mow plants just ABOVE crown
- Narrow rows (improved aisles)
- Pull weeds; irrigate
- This is time to fertilize mature June-bearers

Planting Systems in your yard

Grow day-neutrals in a “Hill System”

- 12” in the row (single or staggered double rows)
- Remove runners
- Remove weeds or use plastic
- Fertilize frequently

Mature Hill Systems

- Do not renovate (mow) day-neutrals (continuous fruiting)
- May clean up some older leaves in winter, but not necessary
- Remove runners before they get too large

Growing in containers

- Requirements are for excellent drainage and a good soil porosity (air); potting soil or compost not ideal
- If bringing in soil for a raised bed – be careful; may still need to amend with good organic matter
- Can buy or make specialized medium
- Ensure good downward drainage below raised bed so it doesn’t behave like a “bath tub”
- Raised bed should be at least 1 ft deep
- Containers can vary but use about 14 inch x 14 inch and 12 inch deep (for 4-5 plants)

Potting media:

- 33% bark
- 33% peat moss
- 33% perlite (pumice)
Producing in a container?
Choose a day-neutral cultivar

Growth:

Pruning runners:

Pruning runners – continue to remove all season

Pruning runners – “daughter plants” will fruit even with no soil:
Harvesting

- Harvest for fresh with "caps"
- Pick without caps for freezing/jam

Common Problems

Frost damage

- Open flowers are damaged at 30 ºF
- No fruit

Partial frost damage to flowers

Row cover for frost protection

Normal flowers

Cold damage

- Crowns damaged in 10 to 20 ºF range depending on time of "winter"
- Damaged/dead crown
- Healthy crown

Cold damage

- In cold regions with little winter rain, straw may be used for winter cold protection
  - Use 3-4 inches of "fluffy" straw to protect from winter injury
  - Place on after few hard frosts
  - Remove just as spring growth starting
  - Rake into aisles

Poor pollination/fruit set

- Caused by:
  - Cold weather
  - Wet weather

http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/
Insects feeding on developing achenes

Lygus bug

Boron deficiency may cause malformed fruit also add boron to the soil in fall – rate based on B test

Fruit rot
Bostryx (gray mold)
• Very common problem
• Aggravated by dense canopy and wet weather during bloom & spring N fertilization

Anthracnose (leather rot)
• Humid, warm weather disease
• Aggravated by dense canopy

Root Rot

• Plant disease-free stock
• Avoid susceptible cultivars
• Plant on well-drained sites
• Use raised beds
• Avoid over irrigating

Powdery Mildew

Not considered an important problem in strawberry

• Curling and “bronzing” of leaves usually not seen until late in season
• Symptoms sometimes on fruit

Root Weevils

• Hand pick adults
• Spray approved chemicals at night

Slugs

• chickens, ducks; hand pick slugs
• remove any hiding places
• stale beer traps
• caution with slug baits (for pets)
Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD)

Mainly a problem in late-season fresh strawberry

http://spottedwing.org/

Ornamental strawberries

Pink Lipstick

The End