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# Strawberries

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EXTENSION SERVICE
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# Strawberries

STRAWBERRIES are chiefly of two kinds, everbearing and June bearing. The everbearing produces a crop in the spring. If the conditions are favorable, the plants will bear again in late summer and produce ripe fruit until freeze-up. The June bearing varieties produce their whole crop at one time during late June and early July.

RESULTS at the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station indicate about the same number of quarts will be produced by either kind per season. The June bearers produce all their crop at one time while the Everbearers divide their crop into two bearing seasons per year.

FOR MARKET, or processing, June bearing is usually preferred. For the home garden, everbearing may be preferred since they provide fresh berries for your family table for a much longer time.

PLANTS are usually satisfactory if obtained nearby. Plants shipped a long distance often arrive in poor condition. Normal rainfall in North Dakota is not quite enough for highest production. Strawberries respond quickly to the addition of water through some form of irrigation.

# Varieties

IN THE past, certain varieties of strawberries were for sale which did not have perfect blossoms. These require other varieties nearby to serve as pollinators. All of the common varieties listed for sale by nursery houses in this area are now perfect flowered. Pollination is no longer a problem. Everbearing varieties recommended are Gem, Evermore (Minnesota 1166), Progressive, and Red Rich for trial. June bearing varieties recommended are Dunlap and Premier. For difficult situations, Cheyenne No. 2 is suggested.

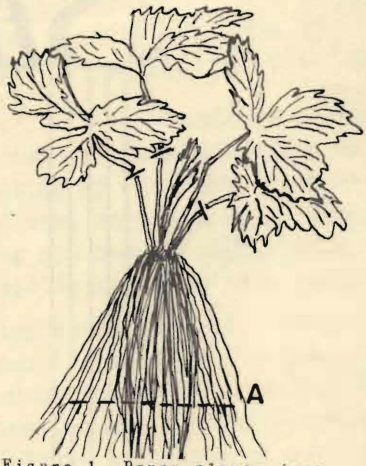


Figure 1. Prune plants just before they are set out. (A) Remove portion of roots as well as 75 percent of the leaves.

# Culture

LOCATE your strawberry bed on fairly level soil. Good drainage is necessary. Water should not be allowed to stand on the strawberry bed. A good garden soil is desirable and should be satisfactory. Strawberries grow better on a loam soil. However, satisfactory crops can be raised on heavy clay or light sand. Strawberries prefer a slightly acid soil but do reasonably well on the alkaline soils such as are most of the soils in North Dakota.

CULTIVATE plants carefully the first summer and allow them to produce all the runners they will during that season. Confine these new plants to a 2-foot strip extending for 1 foot on either side of the original rows.

IF MOISTURE conditions are favorable, the everbearing sorts will produce a crop in the autumn of the first year in which the plants are set. This may be the best crop you take from your planting. June bearers will produce a crop a year from the time the plants are set out, especially if blossoms and runners are removed until early in July.

STRAWBERRIES usually are planted in the early spring. You can also plant them in late summer or early fall if plenty of moisture is present so the young plants can become established before frost. Of the two times, spring planting is preferred. Use only strong and well developed young plants. Never use old or parent plants that have produced many runners. You can tell the young plants by their light colored roots.

UNDER ordinary conditions don't expect your strawberry bed to bear more than two seasons in succession. Start new beds from the old, using the young plants. When the plants are set, remove all blossoms and pinch off about 75 percent of the leaves. Also prune the roots. (See Fig. 1) Proper depth of planting is also important as shown in Fig. 2. Plants are commonly set 1-1/2 feet apart in the row. Space the rows 4 feet apart.

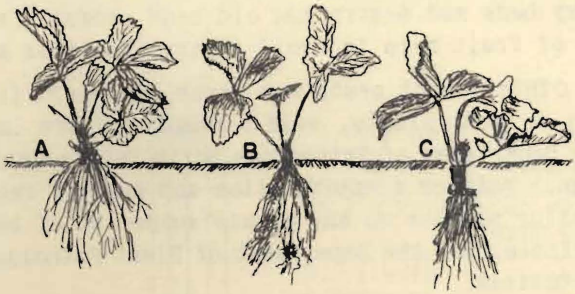


Figure 2. Strawberry plants should be set carefu[illegible] at the proper depth. (A) Too shallow (B) Correct (C) To[illegible]ep.

NEWLY SET plants should be watered, especially if the ground is dry at planting time. Culture is much the same for both types of strawberries, except everbearing varieties are permitted to blossom after July 15 of the year they are set out. June bearing sorts should not be permitted to bear a crop of blossoms or set fruit during the first season.

## Winter Protection

WHEN the ground is frozen hard enough in the fall to form a crust, cover your strawberries with a 4-inch layer of clean straw or clean marsh hay. Whichever material is used, be sure it is free of weed seeds. Do not depend on snow for winter protection. Leave this straw or hay mulch on the plants until they start to grow in the spring. When this growth begins, rake the mulch off enough to let the plants push through. Leave part of the mulch between rows to help keep down weeds, save moisture and help keep berries from becoming soiled.

## Diseases and Insects

LITTLE trouble is experienced from strawberry diseases in North Dakota. Winter injury may be confused or complicated with certain types of root diseases. However, adequate mulch protection and moisture usually prevent these troubles.

AMONG insect pests, strawberry leaf rollers are perhaps most common. These greenish-colored worms fold or roll the leaves together and may cause considerable damage to the foliage. Infestations may be kept down if the strawberry bed is mowed close to the ground and burned over shortly after the fruit is picked. This practice also helps in controlling leaf spot.

THE IMMATURE forms, or "grubs", of the strawberry root weevil eat off the fine roots and crown of the plant close to the ground. This causes a severe stunting of the plant. Leaves become closely bunched together and very deep colored. Rotating the strawberry beds and destroying old beds promptly after the last picking of fruit help to avoid injury from this pest.

CERTAIN OTHER insect pests may cause trouble. If you see insect injury on your plants, send a sample of the insect involved to the Department of Entomology, North Dakota Agricultural College, Fargo. Ask for identification and control recommendations. A similar service on any plants suspected of being diseased is available from the Department of Plant Pathology of the Agricultural College.