

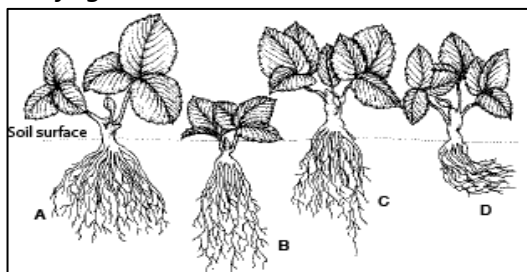
Growing June-Bearing Strawberries at Home



Strawberries are one of the easiest fruits to grow. Homegrown strawberries are far more flavorful than store-bought ones. Their sugar converts to starch soon after they are picked, which reduces their quality.

Follow these steps to grow strawberries in your garden:

1. *Choose a sunny location with well-drained, sandy loam soil, although strawberries can be productive over a broader range of soil types. A pH of 6.2 is ideal; test the soil before planting. Weed the site, mainly the dandelions or quack grass. These are difficult to remove once the strawberries are planted. Avoid sites where tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, eggplants, raspberries, or strawberries have been grown before. These crops host Verticillium Wilt and can leave other pathogens in the soil.*
2. *Plant to the right depth. Remove any black or moldy roots before planting. You can also clip the roots to a length of 4 ". When planting, extend roots vertically into the soil, and cover completely to the crown level. Be sure plants have adequate water during the first few weeks. Plant as soon as the ground is workable in the spring. If your ordered plants arrive and the soil is still frozen, place them in a refrigerator.*



A – just right B – too deep C – too shallow D – don't fold over the roots – trim them instead

3. *Set plants 18"-24" apart within a row, and 48" between rows. Runners will fill the row the first year. Keep only 5 – 6 runners per plant spaced 6" apart within the row. Clip the rest. It will increase both plant and fruit size in the fruiting year.*
4. *Fruiting occurs in subsequent years for June-bearers. Remove all flowers in the 1st year immediately to prevent fruiting. Fruit on first-year plants will rob energy needed for growth and winter survival. Everbearers and day-neutrals can be allowed to flower the first year, but ONLY after July 1.*
5. *Weed but do not cultivate deeper than 2" after planting; the strawberry roots are very shallow. You can successfully control weeds with black plastic or mulch.*

6. *Insects and diseases prevention - Insects can feed on unripe fruit and young vegetative growth. Check daily. Many gardeners will tolerate some insect damage rather than use pesticides. Contact your Cornell Cooperative Extension if a severe infestation occurs.*

7. *Strawberries receive an inch of water weekly. Avoid watering in the late evening, as it makes leaves wet for long periods. Use of a sprinkler during the spring bloom may also prevent frost damage. Sprinkle with a fine mist over the planting from the time the temperature falls below 33°F until the ice melts in the morning. Ice on the plants will prevent the flowers from freezing if mist is continuous.*



8. *Fall mulching prevents low-temperature injury and keeps the fruit clean the following season. Mulch when night temperatures approach 20°F. Cover to a depth of 2 inches. Do not be removed until the new leaves have grown 2" next spring. At this time, half the mulch should be removed and placed between rows to suppress weed growth. Mulching is important on clay soils or soils that remain wet for much of the year.*



Strawberry plants come in three types:

June-bearing varieties - bear fruit all at once, usually over a period of three weeks. Day-length sensitive, these varieties produce buds in the autumn, flowers and fruits the following June, and runners during the long days of summer.

Everbearing varieties produce a big crop in spring, light in the summer, and then bear another crop in late summer/fall.

Day-Neutral varieties produce fruit continuously through the season, until the first frost: Insensitive to day length, these varieties produce buds, fruits, and runners continuously if the temperature remains between 35° and 85°F (1° to 30°C). Production is less than that of June-bearers.

For the home garden, we recommend **June-bearers**.



Happy Growing!