



Johnson Brothers Greenhouses

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Strawberries for the Home Gardener

Strawberries are quite easy to grow. They are perennial, winter hardy, and will thrive in full sunshine & fertile, well-drained soil. Healthy plants will produce an abundance of berries for three to four years, after which they should be replaced.

There are two basic categories of strawberries, the June-bearing and the Everbearing (Traditional & Day-neutral). June-bearers produce one crop per year. These plants produce flowers, fruits, and runners (daughter plants produced on above ground stems) in sequence. One large crop is produced from early June into July. This type of berry is used for jams or freezing, and tend to be the better quality berries. The Traditional Everbearers (type 1) produced a crop in June and then another in late summer or fall. These varieties set buds in response to the day length. The fruit of ever-bearers are typically smaller and the plants usually produce few runners. Day-neutrals (type 2) produce buds and berries continuously throughout the season without regard to the day length. These berries are great for desserts and snacking. Growing different varieties of strawberries will enable you to have fruit throughout the growing season. When the patch needs redoing, in about three years, try some others.

Planting: Plant strawberries in early spring, as soon as you can prepare the soil. Dig a hole for each plant large enough to place the roots straight downward but somewhat spread. The midpoint of the crown should be level or slightly above the soil surface; the topmost root should be just below the soil surface. Fertilizing should wait for growth to start so the roots won't burn. Without a soil test, we recommend a good balanced blend of nitrogen, phosphorus and sulfur, such as 10-10-10 or 14-14-14. The same fertilizer that works well in your vegetable garden will give excellent results on strawberries. Water the fertilizer in well. Do not over-fertilize or you will mainly get leaves and few fruit. The plants should be fed again at mid-season. Mulch well to prevent weeds and to conserve moisture. Strawberries require regular water for the best flavor and fruit production. All strawberries need good drainage so the plantings should be raised above the surrounding area.

June-bearers are usually grown in a raised row. Rows should be set 3-4' apart. Set the plants 18" to 24" apart within the row. When the first runners are produced they should be about 6 inches away from the original plant. Allow the runners that are produced from the 'mother' plants to develop and root. Only allow a few runners per plant (5), after which additional starts need to be cut off. Keep the remaining 18" to 30" between rows clear by making sure the runners being formed are growing in the row. Any runners produced late in the year or grow where not desired should be removed. The first year you plant, remove all flower clusters on the June bearers before fruit is formed. If you try to produce strawberries the first year, you'll stress the young plant. This limits crown and leaf growth, which decreases the following seasons' yield.

Ever-bearing strawberries do not produce as many runners as June-bearers, so using a hill system for planting is preferred. Make the hills about 15" high. Set the hills apart in double-or triple-wide rows (on a raised bed if necessary). Leave paths between the hills 18" to 24" wide. Remove all runners that develop throughout the growing season before they root. Ever-bearers should not be allowed to produce runners until the mother plant is depleted and you wish to create plants for future use. Remove only the first flowers, allowing flowers developed after July 1 to fruit. This allows plants to get well established before fruiting. Plants will flower and fruit the rest of the summer and fall until frost. The original mother plants should be dug out after the second or third year.

Disease Control. Plants purchased at a reputable nursery (like Johnson Brothers!) are virus free. Aphids, though, do spread viruses among strawberries. Rigid insect control is necessary to avoid this problem. Control aphids with chemical or manual methods. Strawberries are also susceptible to Red Stele root rot, thereby **drainage is very important.**

Varieties Johnson Brothers is proud to offer you this season

Variety	Fruit	Uses	Notes
Spring Crop			
Benton	Large, bright red exterior, firm, mild, excellent flavor & color	Fresh, preserves, excellent keeping quality	Vigorous, drought resistant, Virus & Red Stele tolerant, ripens mid to late season
Hood	Large, bright red, firm, easy to cap, excellent flavor	Fresh, preserves & jam, poor freezing	Early to mid-season, resistant to Red Stele, Mildew & Root Rot; virus intolerant
Totem	Firm, conical shape, bright red berry, excellent flavor	Fresh, cooked, canned, preserves	Very hardy. Most disease resistant strawberry developed
Shuksan	Long & glossy, bright red, firm, tough skin, excellent flavor	Excellent fresh, preserves, frozen	Virus tolerant and Red Stele resistant, very vigorous & large plant
Everbearing			
Quinault	Large, crimson, soft fruit, good flavor, difficult to cap	Fresh, desserts, poor frozen or jam	Slight crop in June, moderate to heavy crop to Sept, vigorous runners, susceptible to mildew
Day-neutral			
Fern	Large, very firm, sweet	Fresh, preserves & freezing	Always has fruit in development, newer variety, should do well in PNW
Seascape	Red & glossy, excellent, sweet flavor, firm & large	Fresh	Productive, bears over a long season, highest yields in late spring and fall, good disease resistance but prone to leaf spot
Tristar	Small to med. firm, glossy deep red; good, sweet flavor	Fresh & frozen	Great for hanging baskets & containers, resists Red Stele & Verticillium Wilt