

GROW STRAWBERRIES!

People often to come into the nursery and ask “So what’s the best strawberry variety?” I always respond, somewhat humorously, but definitely truthfully, “Any strawberry variety you grow yourself will be better than anything you buy in the store.”

General Care

Strawberries are pretty easy to grow. They do not require tons of water, they are not deep rooted, and they grow well in pots. Before planting amend your soil with Soil Building Compost or the Big Harvest Bale. In pots, use Edna’s Best Potting Soil. Plant crowns right at the soil level. If planted too shallowly plants dry out quickly; if planted too deeply, the crowns rot.

Heavy feeding results in lots of vegetative growth with less fruit and more runners. Use organic, slow-release fertilizers like the Dr. Earth Tomato, Herb, Vegetable Food.

Snails and slugs are your biggest concern once plants start fruiting. Birds will occasionally peck at ripe strawberries too, so be ready to pick once plants start producing.

Strawberry Pots

The classic strawberry pots remain as popular as ever. The challenge is keeping the strawberry pot adequately watered, because water can flow out the pockets in the side.

One trick I learned years ago is to get a piece of 1” PVC pipe as long as the height of the pot. Cap one end, and drill ¼” holes all over the pipe. As you plant your strawberry pot, position the pipe in the center of the pot. Once planted, water the pipe, and the pot gets watered from the inside out! Neat!

Varieties - June-Bearing vs. Ever-bearing

‘June Bearing’ varieties produce a mass of fruit over a short period during spring, some earlier, some later. ‘Ever-bearing’ varieties produce less fruit at one time, but over a much longer period, often into fall. June-Bearing varieties typically grow more vigorously with more runners; ever-bearing varieties spread less vigorously with fewer runners.

STRAWBERRY VARIETIES

'Albion' - ever-bearing; robust grower; more disease resistant; large deep red fruit and excellent flavor.

'Camarosa' - June-bearing; large, very firm, flat-shaped fruit.

'Chandler' - vigorous, June-bearing variety; medium to large-sized fruit; very popular with commercial growers.

'Quinault' - the best ever-bearing variety for containers and hanging baskets; fruits on un-rooted runners; very large fruit with excellent, sweet flavor.

'San Andreas' - more heat tolerant than most varieties; large, narrow-shaped fruit.

'Seascape' - ever-bearing; sweet, very red, medium to large sized fruit; heat and salt tolerant.

'Sequoia' - June-bearing; large dark red fruit; can act ever-bearing in our mild climate.

Temptation - runner-less, ever-bearing variety; large fruit; great for small spaces.

Alpine Strawberries have very small sweetly, exquisite, aromatic fruit. 'Pineapple Crush' and 'Yellow Wonder' have yellow fruits.