



Success with Strawberries

Strawberries are easy to grow in the Pacific Northwest. Two types are widely grown in home gardens. June Bearing types, like Hood, Shuksan, Puget Reliance, and Puget Summer, bear one crop of berries in June or early July. Day neutral, or everbearing types, such as TriStar, Selva, and Seascape, produce both flowers and fruit from June through September or October.



Site Selection

Strawberries prefer sandy, well drained soil and full sun. Remove all weeds, and work in compost before planting.

Plant dormant plants late winter through mid-spring. Trim the roots to 4"-5", and set so that the crown is at soil level.

Strawberries need soil moisture to thrive. The most crucial times are before and during harvest, and in late summer and early fall when June bearers are forming flower buds for next year's fruit. Drip or soaker hose irrigation is preferred to avoid fruit rot. Control weeds to reduce competition in the bed.

June Bearers

June bearers should be planted 15"-24" apart in rows spaced 36"-42", and runners allowed to fill the spaces between the plants to form a solid row 14"-18" wide. **Remove the first season's flowers by cutting or pinching them off.** This will encourage runner formation and good root establishment. Pin or peg the runners to fill the row. Do not let plants root closer than 6". Any runners that form after late August should be removed. The second season, the plants can be allowed to bear a full crop.

After June bearers finish fruiting, cut or mow the leaves to stimulate vigorous growth. Dig up and replant rooted runners to fill gaps in the rows. At this time, lightly fertilize the bed.

Day Neutral or Everbearers

Day neutral varieties should be planted 10"-18" apart in rows spaced 30"-36". In the closer spacing, remove all runners throughout the season; in wider plantings, allow one runner between each plant. **Remove the first blossoms to encourage root development.** Flowers appearing after mid-June can be allowed to form fruit.

Fertilize day neutral varieties in late summer.

In most home gardens, the strawberry bed will need complete replanting every 3-5 years. You will know it is time for a new bed when production declines. Seascape and Puget Reliance both are longer lived and need to be replanted less often.