



Strawberries

Planting Instructions

First, decide what kind(s) of berries you want to plant. Junebearing strawberries bear their whole crop in late spring over 2-3 weeks. This gives you a large crop for making jams, preserves, and for freezing. Everbearing strawberries produce strawberries in spring and fall, and day neutral everbearing strawberries produce strawberries all season long, so of course you need to pick the berries often.

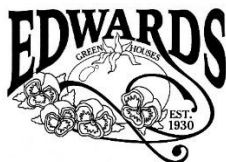
Plant the berries in an area that gets full sun all day (some late afternoon shade is okay). Strawberries like rich, well-drained soil, so amend the soil, if necessary, with lots of compost. Raised beds are excellent for strawberries, because raised beds have very good drainage. Consult a berry book or gardening book to determine a berry bed design that will work best for you (hills, rows, or bordering another bed, for example).

If you buy bare root plants, trim the roots to 4 inches long before planting. If you can't plant the bare root berries right away, dampen the roots, put the plants in a plastic bag, and keep them cool in your refrigerator or a cool area of the garage or basement. If you buy potted plants, the roots will already have been trimmed. When you plant the strawberry, make sure that the crown of the plant (the part from which new leaves are emerging) is only half covered with soil – too high, and the plant will dry out, too low and the plant will suffocate. Also, make sure the roots are straight, by placing them over a cone of soil/compost mix.

Consult your books regarding fertilization. Organic gardeners will want to make use of bone meal, kelp meal, compost tea, mycorrhizae, and compost, or an organic fertilizer containing these ingredients plus other ingredients useful for maintaining the health of the soil and the plants. Non-organic gardeners will want to use a 5-10-10 or 10-10-10 fertilizer, applied according to package directions, in early spring and late summer.

For Junebearing strawberries, disbud (remove flowers and flower buds) for the entire first season after planting; for everbearing strawberries, disbud for the first 5-6 weeks of the first season after planting. Disbudding makes the strawberry use its energy to grow strong roots and leaves, resulting in bigger harvests later on. It's also a good idea to remove runners from strawberries until August, to give more energy to the plants for fruit production. After August, when the harvest is winding down, you can let the runners go, if you want a denser strawberry bed, or, if your mother plants are aging, you can pull the mother plants out and let the runners replace them. Strawberry plants produce well for 2-4 years, then berry production decreases. By that time, you will have plenty of runners for replacements.

Many people mow their plants with a lawnmower at the end of the season or at the end of winter when the ground is still frozen, raking out the mowed leaves and stems. This improves sanitation in the bed and reduces fruit rot. Make sure your lawnmower blade is set high enough, 1.5 to 2 inches, that it doesn't cut the strawberry crown. You can also trim the strawberries by hand, with clippers.



4106 Sand Creek Street Boise, ID 83703

www.edwardsgreenhouse.com Phone: 208-342-7548