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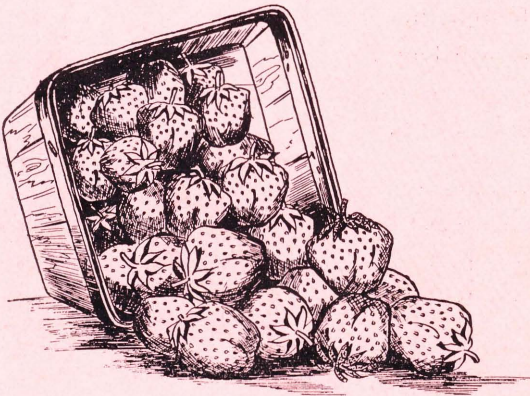
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Strawberry Growing in Michigan  
Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service  
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*Strawberry  
Growing  
in Michigan*



**MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE  
EXTENSION DIVISION  
EAST LANSING**

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# STRAWBERRY GROWING IN MICHIGAN

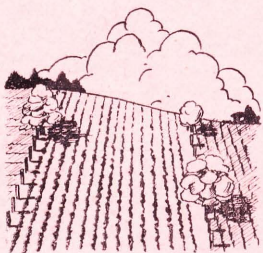
**T**HE strawberry is the most important of the small fruits grown in Michigan. The plants are hardy, and the fruit requires little or no spraying for the control of insects and diseases. It does well on a variety of soil types, and is grown to some extent in all counties of the state. Strawberries should be grown in every farm and suburban garden in Michigan.

A matted row 100 feet long not only will provide fresh berries for a family of four or five, but also additional fruit that should be canned, preserved and frozen for winter use.

Though this leaflet is intended primarily for home gardeners, it may be stated that well managed commercial beds usually return substantial profits.

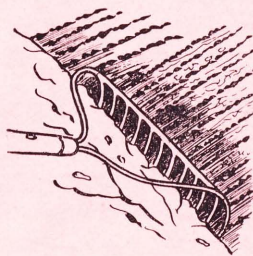
The success of your planting, be it home or commercial, will depend to a considerable extent upon the consideration you give to the factors listed below.

## THE SITE SHOULD:



- Be chosen with care.
- Be fairly level.
- Have enough slope to insure air and water drainage.
- Be elevated above surrounding country.

## THE SOIL SHOULD:



- Be moderately fertile.
- Be well drained.
- Contain enough humus to retain moisture.

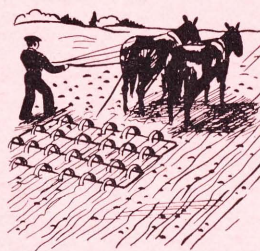
A sandy or gravelly loam soil is the best. Soils that lack humus should be built up by the use of farm manures (from 10 to 20 tons per acre) or green manure crops (clover or alfalfa) before strawberries are planted.

## FERTILIZERS

Farm manures are the best general-purpose fertilizers because of the humus-forming materials which they contain. If necessary, soil fertility may be maintained by applying a complete fertilizer, such as a 4-16-4, at the rate of 5 pounds for each 100 feet of row. This should be applied when preparing the soil for planting.



## SOIL PREPARATION



Grow several cultivated crops to rid the soil of grubs and weeds.

Plow or spade deeply—as early in the spring as the soil can be worked.

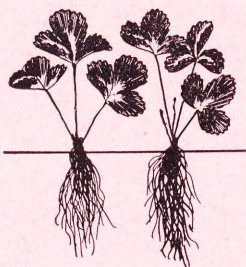
Harrow or rake several times with an ordinary harrow.

Harrow with a spike-tooth or smoothing harrow, or rake again.

## TIME OF PLANTING

Plant as soon as the soil can be properly prepared in the spring.

## THE PLANTS SHOULD:

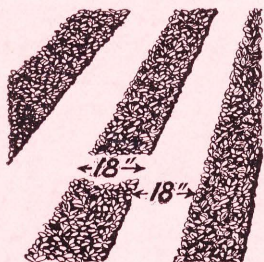


- Be obtained from a reliable nurseryman or taken from a vigorous, young, fruiting plantation.
- Have medium-sized crowns.

- Have large, light-colored, healthy roots.

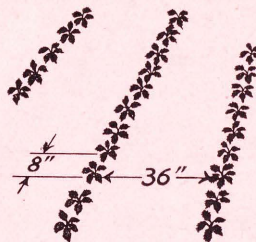
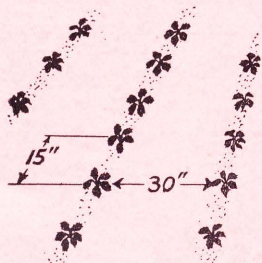
## SYSTEMS OF TRAINING

*Matted-row System* is commonly used in commercial plantings and may also be used in the home garden. It requires 6,000 to 7,000 plants per acre. Rows should be spaced 3 to 4 feet apart. Set plants at intervals of 18 to 30 inches in the rows. Allow runners to form a mat 15 to 18 inches wide.



*Hill System* produces berries of large size and high quality and is therefore popular with home gardeners. It requires more work than the matted-row system, and for that reason is not used by commercial planters.

Fourteen thousand plants are needed to set one acre. Space rows 2 to 3 feet apart. Set plants 12 to 15 inches apart in the rows. Do not allow runners to develop.



24 inches and allow each plant to produce two runners.

*Hedge Row System* is another that may be used to good advantage by home gardeners, but not by professional growers. It requires 6,000 to 7,000 plants per acre. Space rows 3 feet apart. Set plants at intervals of

## TRANSPLANTING

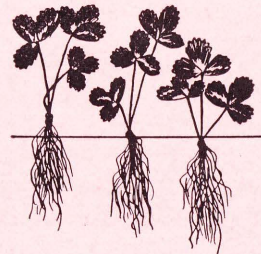
Is very important.

Should be preceded by accurate marking-out. (This will facilitate subsequent cultivation.)

Plants should be unpacked and either planted or heeled in as soon as received.

Remove blossom buds, old runners and all but two or three inside leaves before planting.

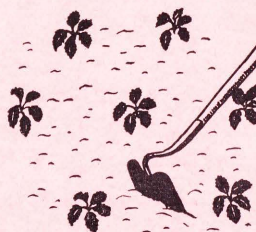
Set crowns of plants even with the surface of the ground and pack the soil carefully.



## CARE DURING FIRST SEASON

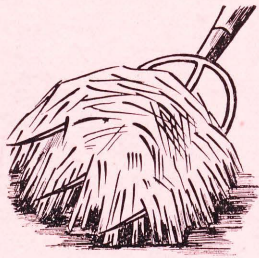
The flower stems usually produced soon after the plants are set should be removed as they appear.

New plants from runners should be kept 4 to 6 inches apart.



Frequent shallow cultivation and hand-hoeing are necessary. Start early and repeat every 10 days or two weeks until freezing weather.

## MULCHING



Mulching protects the plants from winter injury, smothers weeds, and retards time of blossoming. It should be done soon after the first hard freeze in the fall.

Use marsh hay, millet, Sudan grass or wheat, oats or rye straw that is free from grain and weed seed.

Cover the plants to a depth of 3 or 4 inches. (Two or three tons per acre will be needed.)

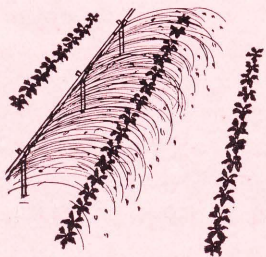
Open the mulch over the plants as soon as growth starts in the spring. If too thick to allow plants to grow through, remove surplus material and tramp it into the alleys between rows.

## SPRING TILLAGE

Is necessary when no winter mulch is used or when a mulched field becomes weedy. Do not cultivate too deep. A light mulch may be temporarily forked to the side of the plant rows. A heavy mulch should be moved from row to row as the work is done.

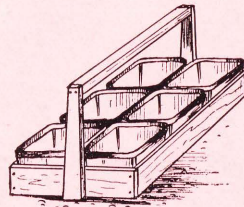
## IRRIGATION:

The overhead spray system is the one most commonly used by commercial growers. Such a system costs \$250 or more per acre.



- Helps establish young plants.
- Prevents losses which might otherwise occur in hot dry weather.
- Helps ward off light spring frosts.

## HARVESTING



The fields should be picked over at least every other day (every day in hot weather).

Pick the rows clean.

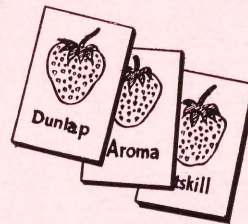
Handle berries carefully.

Place fruit in a cool shady place as soon as possible.

## RENEWING THE PLANTATION:

- Should not be attempted unless the plants are vigorous and relatively free from weeds, insect pests, and disease.
- Is accomplished in the matted-row system by narrowing the rows with a plow or cultivator to a strip of young and vigorous plants. The plants in this strip are then thinned to intervals of approximately one foot. Then proceed as with a new planting.

## VARIETIES



Varieties should be selected with care. Because of competition from other states in June, mid-season and late varieties are usually the most profitable.

Choose those that are being grown successfully in the locality.

Dorset and Fairfax are suggested for the home garden because of their excellent flavor and quality. For commercial plantings, Premier, Dunlap and Catskill are among the best of the standard June-bearing varieties.

Gem, Wayzata and Mastodon are the best of the everbearing or fall-bearing varieties. They are not recommended for commercial plantings.

# INSECTS AND DISEASES



*White Grubs* feed on large roots and crowns. They should be eradicated by growing cultivated crops before strawberries are set.

*Strawberry Leaf-roller* draws the leaflets together with a web and feeds from the inside. Spray with arsenate of lead (2 pounds to 50 gallons of water) in the spring, just before larva begin to fold leaves. In a small patch the infested leaves may be removed by hand and burned.

*Leaf Spot* can be controlled in fruiting plantations by spraying with bordeaux before blossoming, and again 10 to 14 days later. Young or non-fruiting plants may be sprayed whenever necessary.

Planting resistant varieties, mowing the plantation after harvest and then burning the leaves, also helps keep disease and insect pests under control.

\* \* \* \* \*

Most Michigan growers are within trucking distance of industrial cities that are fine markets. The Michigan crop ripens and is sent to these markets, late in the season. Other shipping areas have by this time passed their peak. Because of these facts Michigan offers exceptional opportunities for commercial strawberry growers.

Those who desire more detailed information should write to the Bulletin Office, Michigan State College, for Special Bulletin 182.

Publication is out of Special Print