



IRISH EYES GARDEN SEEDS

STRAWBERRIES (EVERBEARING) GROWING GUIDE

Strawberries are a sweet treat in the garden, and it's no surprise that they're the most widely grown fruit in the world. Strawberries thrive from tropical to subarctic climates, are easy to grow, and tolerate a wide range of soil types.

Everbearing varieties, like our Albion, Ozark, and Seascape, typically bear fruit in summer and fall.

| WHEN TO SOW | SUN / PART SHADE | SEED SPACING | ROW SPACING | PLANTING DEPTH | DAYS TO GERMINATE | DAYS TO MATURITY |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| As soon as soil can be worked | Sun | 18 inches | 2-3 feet | 1/4 inch | 7-37 | 90-120 |

Soil and Fertilizing

Strawberries like deep, well-drained sandy loams. They don't tolerate extremes in pH well, with the ideal pH being slightly acidic at 5.8-6.2. Have your soil tested before planting, using a home tester or asking your local county extension to do it for you.

About 6 weeks after planting, apply two pounds of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 100 square feet. Sprinkle the fertilizer evenly over the growing area, avoiding direct contact with the foliage. Add two pounds again after renovating in July.

Planting and Growing

Everbearing strawberries can be grown in-ground, and also in containers and raised beds.

First Year

- Before transplanting, soak the roots for two hours to rehydrate them.
- Dig a hole deep enough so the roots extend vertically and are not bent.
- Cover the plants with soil just below the crown (where the plant top meets the roots). The crown should be at soil surface, not buried.
- Avoid planting strawberries in an area where they were recently grown, or where crops in the tomato family (including eggplants, potatoes, and peppers) have grown, as they may carry a root fungus.

Next Few Years

- If you carefully cover your strawberry plants with straw or mulch, they will overwinter and come back the next year in most climates.
- You can also start fresh with new, disease-free planting stock.
- If growing in containers, replace the growth medium with fresh sterile medium, and replant with new plants.

Thinning

Remove all blossoms 6-8 weeks after planting to improve yields. Clip off runners to keep the plants from getting too crowded.

Watering

Strawberries are shallow rooted. Water often, but keep the plants well-drained.

Harvesting

- To pick strawberries, cradle the fruit in your hand, pinch the stem between thumb and forefinger, and pull. Pick the caps along with the fruit.
- "Renovate" immediately after the harvest to reduce disease. Stimulate new growth by mowing or clipping the plants to a height of 3 inches, and immediately remove the clippings.
- You can expect to get 3-5 years of harvests, if the area is kept weed- and disease-free, and if you renovate every year.

For soil testing or other questions specific to your growing climate, please contact your local county extension agent.

Visit <http://www.almanac.com/content/cooperative-extension-services> to find the office nearest you.