

- Fruit in general, requires full sun, at least 6 hours per day
- Provide well-drained soil enriched with organic matter
- Not appropriate for raised beds in the north
- Open site with good drainage and airflow
- Keep a **firm hand** (weeding, pruning and managing systems) with fruit so it produces abundantly for you
- Can mulch with 2-3" of compost each year to help keep down weeds and to improve drainage and water retention
- Fertilize when plants emerge/bud and can again 6 weeks later with a good granular fertilizer
- Pick ripe fruit regularly to cut down on insect attraction
- Use a structure and netting to protect ripening fruit from predators
- Follow good cultural practices to reduce disease, weed and harvesting problems

Strawberry

1 quart of berries from each plant

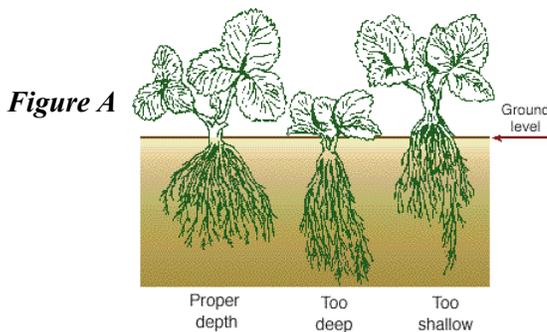
25 - 50 plants will provide plenty of fresh berries for a family of 4...For preserving need an additional 50 - 100 plants

Culture

Grow in a system such as rows that allows you to weed and walk between plants and providing air circulation. In the first season remove flowers and daughters to allow rooting for future years.

Soak bare roots for an hour prior to planting in water.

Plant them correctly. Make sure the crown is half way exposed from the soil. This may be one of the fussiest plants to get at the right depth. (Figure A)



A well-managed strawberry bed.



Space rows 3-4 feet apart; plants spaced 2.5 feet apart.

Provide 1" of water a week. Water overhead early in the day or by soaker hose.

In subsequent years use daughters to expand widen or lengthen rows or fill in spaces but remove them from becoming matted. (Figure B)

After fruiting, mow old tops off of the plants to renew the bed. Set lawn mower high enough to remove strawberry leaves but not injure crowns. Then use a rototiller or spade to cut each plant row to a 6-inch width. Runner plants from the 6-inch strip of "mother" plants will form a new matted row of plants.

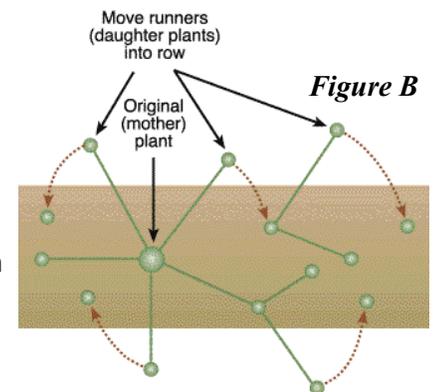
Replant with **new** plants after 4 years and avoid planting where you had any nightshade crops, raspberries or vine crops in the last 3 years to prevent verticillium wilt infection. You can replant in the same strawberry bed after removing the plants.

Use netting to protect fruit from birds. Fencing for deer, raccoon and rabbits.

Mulching

Winter mulch is used to prevent freezing and thawing of the soil and subsequent heaving of the plants out of the soil. Raised beds may require further protection because without reliable snow cover the plants can freeze dry.

Put down clean straw as mulch in November. Use 4-5" of loose straw over rows. In spring, move straw to spaces between rows to keep them weed free and to allow berries to form on top of the straw.



Best online resource on all fruit for Minnesota gardeners...

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/fruit/strawberries-for-the-home-garden/>