





Strawberry *(Fragaria x ananassa)*

Type	Deciduous/ Evergreen	Height x Width (metres)	Spacing (metres)	Pollinator	Soil type	Sun	Moisture	Shelter	Plant	Harvest
	F	0.20 x 0.30	0.35	N				Y	Autumn	Summer to autumn

Site

- Needs an open, sunny site with no frosts at flowering or fruiting times, and shelter from wind.
- Soil should be slightly acidic, well drained but able to retain moisture.

Care

- Easy to grow if cared for.
- Plants need to be replaced after 3 years – put new plants in a different place to avoid a buildup of diseases (allow 4 years before replanting a site).
- To allow frequent picking, plant on garden edges or in containers near the house.
- Best planted in early autumn so they can get established during the winter.
- Plant 45cm apart on a slight mound, with the plant's crown slightly raised.
- Roots are very shallow – water regularly in dry weather, but make sure the soil isn't waterlogged and the berries aren't damp.
- Mulch the ground with straw or pine needles to retain moisture and keep the fruit off the ground – but watch out for slugs hiding in the mulch.
- Protect from birds.
- Cut off any 'runners' that develop during the first year.
- At the end of each season, remove the mulch and all dead leaves, and carefully fork up any compacted soil between the plants.
- Self-fertile, pollinated mainly by bees.

Companions

- Parsley, marigold, lettuce, borage, chives, lavender, onions, sage.

Harvest

- Pick fruit as it ripens.
- Eat fresh with cereal or yoghurt, or in fruit salad. Cook and bottle or freeze, or make into jam.

Health

- Very high in vitamin C when eaten fresh, good for manganese, potassium, iron, Vitamins A, B6 and K, calcium, fibre, antioxidants and anti-cancer agents.

Plants for free

Each year, catch a few runners from disease-free plants to replace old plants:

- Bury pots of compost in the ground near the mother-plant and peg runners down into them to grow roots.
- Once the roots have formed, cut the runners free and shift the pots to a sheltered spot until you're ready to plant them out.

Strawberry runner pegged down into a pot in the ground

