

25 Years of Strawberry Production

Clear Brook Farm, Shaftsbury, Vermont





Previous year site prep:

- Early summer fallow.
- Summer cover millet, sorghum, oats, peas. Mowed throughout summer and Winter kill.

We have planted 9,000-9,500 crowns/year. In our spacing has been about 1.25-1.5 Acres.

2022 cutting down to 8,000 with better care.

We have access to enough land for long rotations between our three main fields.



Favorite Varieties:

- **Galletta:** Early, medium size, tasty
- **Wendy:** Early, Very tasty, productive for PYO
- **Cavendish:** Mid-season mainstay. Large, tasty!, productive. Problems last 2 years to look into
- **Jewel:** Late midseason. Beautiful, tasty, fairly productive
- **Valley Sunset:** Late, Concentrated set, Nice flavor
- **Mesabi:** Almost too late. Don't grow every year.



Planting

- Late April/early May (ideally after onions)
- Presently use Mechanical Transplanter. Checchi did not work for us. Waterwheel too slow.
- Make sure crowns at correct depth.
- Buried Drip tape a love/hate relationship.
- Spacing 16" w/in row. 72" beds.



Irrigation option is pretty essential in planting year.

Buried drip is a great option... Not so fun to remove every year, but very nice to cultivate over.





Fertility

- No broadcast fertility
- Krehers 5-4-3 top-dressed late May, late July and late August
- 500#/A each time
- Clampco sidedresser
- Depending on plant health and weather
spring top dress
80%krehers & 20%
chilean mix 250#/A



Weed “Control”

- As much stale seedbed previous year as we can
- Early “kovar” blind cultivator 2-3 times
- Kress fingers from then on with kovar follow.
- As plants start to runner we use side knives and sometimes small discs to cut runners if too many.
- Hoeing and lots of hand weeding, esp on wet years

Raise our own straw. Custom cut. Teagle bale chopper. May have to start buying straw in 2022.





Mulch Removal. Generally last week March-1st week April. Not too early for frost reasons





Frost protection.
Remay generally
needed only on
earliest varieties. **A**
must have option
either irrigation or row
cover.

Potential





Retail Harvest

- Clean Hands
- Clean containers
- Good picking =
 1. No white tips!!,
 2. No rot,
 3. Full quarts, we top off on display
 4. Thorough harvest.



Pick Your Own!

- “Clean up” field to becoming a nice revenue source.
- Concentrate time and days to make it worthwhile





Day-neutrals:
We no longer
grow them. Nice
when they're
nice, not so nice
with SWD.



Essential farm stand item: Makes June profitable at the farm stand. Organic berries are a great draw and increase other sales.



Thank you! Please contact me with any questions! andrew@clearbrookfarm.com

