

30+ Years of Growing PYO Matted Row Strawberries at River Berry Farm



Why Strawberries?

- We had experience with strawberries.
- Customers travel for fruit.
- We thought we had moved to the boonies, PYO strawberries was a good way to have customers find us.



River Berry Farm, Fairfax VT

- Bedding Plants
- Wholesale Vegetables
- PYO Strawberries



Why Matted Row and PYO

- For us matted row works best for PYO.
- Matted row has proven to be the most profitable for our farm.
- For organic production PYO allows us to sell fruit we couldn't retail.



Our Matted Row System

First 10 years

- Plant on flat ground
April planting.
- 52" row spacing.
- 15" -18" in-row spacing
- Fruit 2 years.

Now

- Plant on raised beds on
bare ground.
- 68" bed centers,
- 2 rows on bed.
- 18" in-row spacing.
- Fruit 1 year



Double Row Planting Per Bed



Narrower rows usually results in higher yields because of increased row edge/acre.

We started having trouble with poor establishment, resulting in lots of gaps in rows; due to poor management, growing to many other crops.

Converted to wider spacing with 2 rows planted per bed.





Wider rows with 2 rows planted per bed, results in less gaps and wide paths for PYO customers.

Years Prior to Planting

- Cover crop: rye/vetch or sweet clover plowdown.
- Follow with oats and field peas.

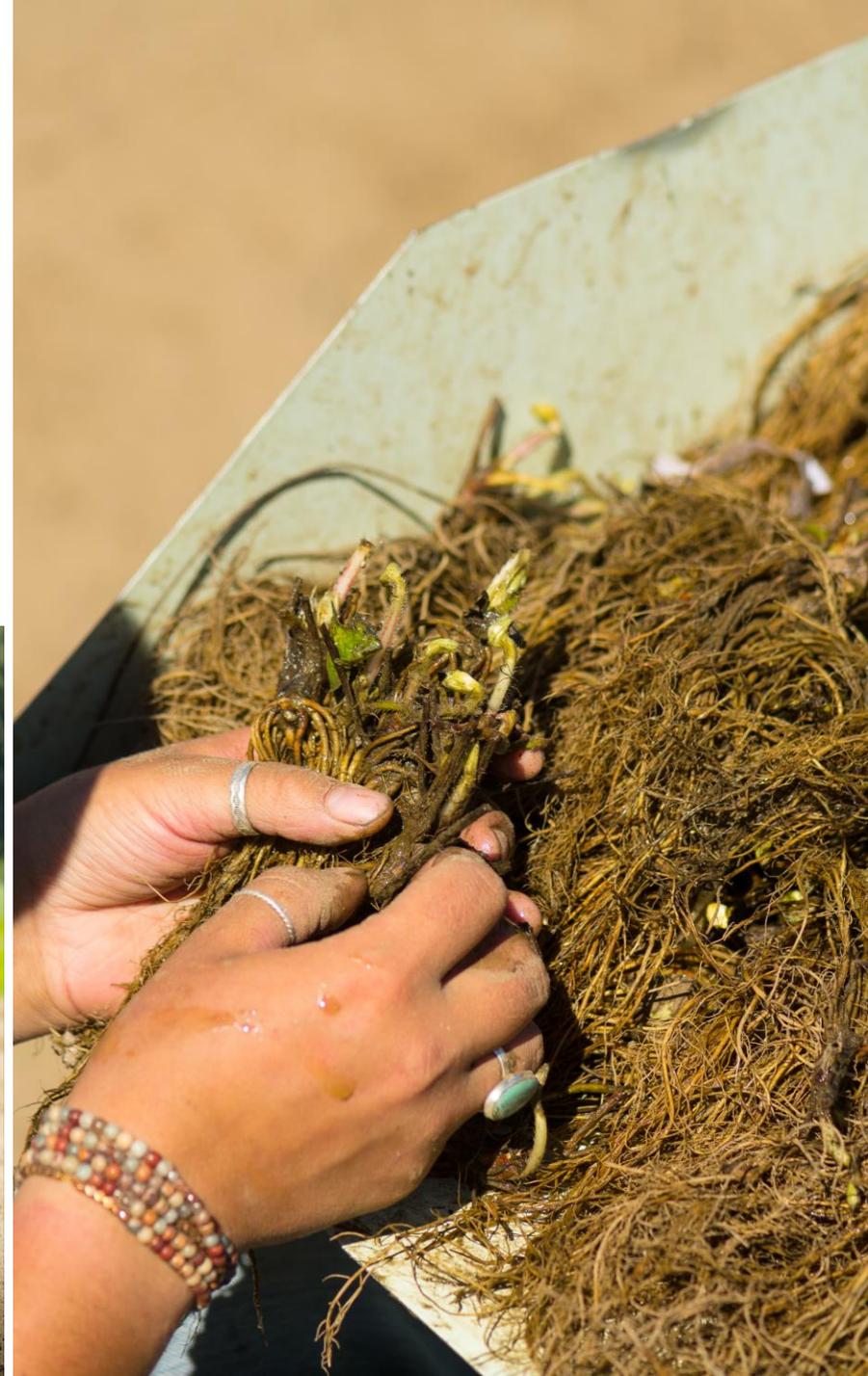


Main Varieties

- Cavendish
- Jewel
- Cabot

Minor Varieties

- Wendy
- ACVS





Weed Management

- Tine Weeder is main tool
- Use Finger Weeder
- Shovels and Hand Hoeing once runners start
- Hand Weeding

Major Insect Pest:
Tarnished Plant Bug

Management:
Scouting,
Good weed control.

Sprays:
Pyganic,
Beuvaria Bassiana.

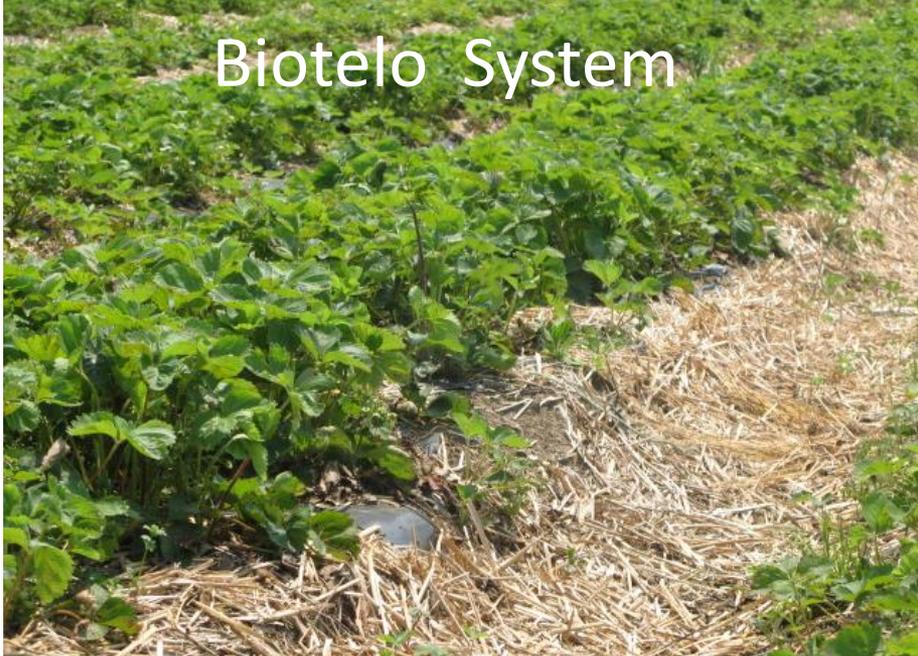


Diseases

- Botrytis Grey Mold
 - Botrystop
- Leaf Spot complex
 - Copper in fall and early spring-



Biotelo System



Fall Plug Planting(Chandlers)

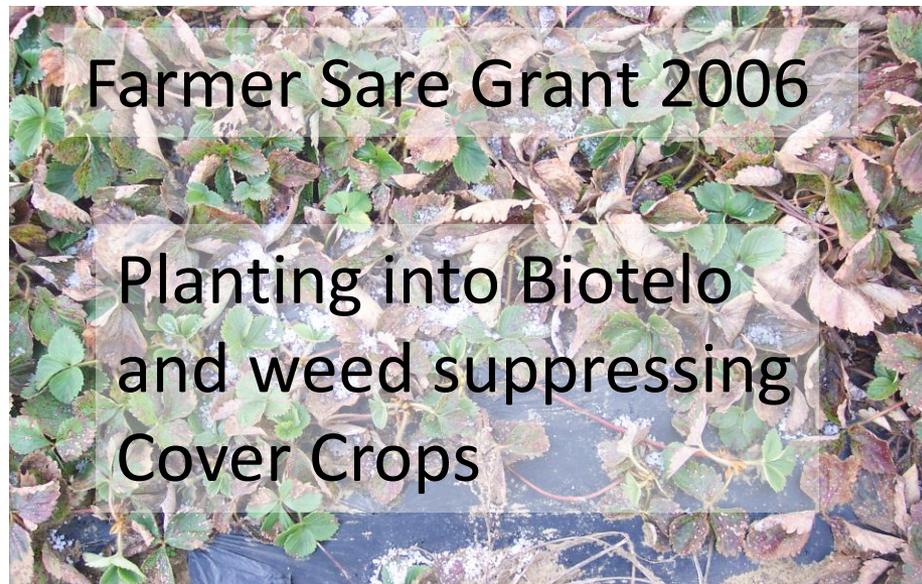


Crowns into Plastic



Farmer Sare Grant 2006

Planting into Biotelo
and weed suppressing
Cover Crops



Other Systems we have Tried



Oats planted
between Rows



Day- Neutrals for fall fruit



Producing our straw

Things We Keep Doing or Trying



Our Stand 30 years ago
PYO price .90/lb
Our Stand today
PYO price \$4.25/lb





This is Why We Keep Growing
PYO Strawberries