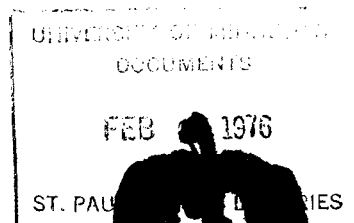


3/ **FRUIT GROWERS' LETTER**

By Leonard B. Hertz, extension horticulturist

February 1976

MINNESOTA BERRY GROWERS SCHOOL WILL BE HELD IN ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

The Minnesota Berry Growers will meet March 21 and 22, 1976 at the Student Center of the St. Paul Campus, University of Minnesota. Featured speaker will be Bill Courter, horticulturist, University of Illinois and extension specialist in small fruit crops. He will discuss new ideas and techniques for the "pick-your-own" harvest of strawberries and raspberries.

Part of the program will be devoted to discussions on varieties, insect, disease, and weed control.

The annual "night before the Berry School" will be held again this year and all interested growers should watch their mail for further details.

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STORAGE AND TRANSPORTING STRAWBERRY PLANTS

The supply of strawberry plants for new plantings in Minnesota in 1976 appears to be adequate. However, it should be noted that demand for plants by both the commercial grower and the home gardener is at an all time high. Now is the time to start planning for next year.

Spring Dug Plants

Plants which are obtained in the spring should be dug when they are dormant (no plant growth evident). Unfortunately, some plants are dug and sold when they are nondormant (actively growing) so their desirability as planting stock is limited because of their reduced chance for field survival.

How can a person tell if plants have been damaged? Observe the amount of growth of crown leaf buds as well as new root growth. If plant growth is excessive, perhaps the plants should not be purchased.

Commercial Cold Storage

Commercial cold storage of strawberry plants is not currently practiced in Minnesota on a large scale. However, when certain plant storage requirements are met, quality plants can be maintained. The following practices are suggested:

- Use quality, dormant, and properly clean plants.
- Pack in 1.5 mil polyethylene liners not sealed and without moss.
- Cool plants and store at 30° - 32° F.
- Avoid fluctuating temperatures.

Transporting Strawberry Plants

- Refrigerated transit at temperatures as near the storage temperature as possible is recommended.
- For unrefrigerated shipment, transit periods up to 3 days are acceptable if transit temperatures do not exceed 60° F. When transit temperatures exceed 60° F., limit shipping time to less than 1 day.
- The fastest way to ship plants is by bus or air freight.

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APPLYING PESTICIDES

Less can be enough when applying pesticides. EPA says o. k. , provided (1) such use is recommended in writing by a knowledgeable expert; (2) product is effective at lower rate; (3) other label directions are followed; and (4) underdosages are not repeated to exceed total recommended use within specified period of time. Ruling follows a year of controversy over the issue. (From American Fruit Grower.)

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WHERE SUBSIDIES GO?

In only one program out of 10 studied by the Joint Economic Committee had federal subsidy decreased during 1970-1975. The program was agriculture. The study showed that subsidy to agriculture went from \$5.7 billion in 1970 to \$2.5 billion in 1975. Total subsidies in the nation increased during that period from \$64.4 billion to \$95.1 billion.

Where did the increases go? Biggest jump in subsidies was in the health field which includes Medicare and Medicaid--grew from \$8.6 billion to \$16.6 billion. Food subsidies increased from \$1.5 billion to \$5.9 billion and subsidized housing from \$11.7 billion to \$15.7 billion. (From New York State Horticultural Society Newsletter.)

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NEW FALL RASPBERRY SUPERIOR TO OTHERS

Heritage, a fall-bearing red raspberry developed by the New York Experiment Station, is superior to all other fall-bearing cultivars, according to George Klingbeil, University of Wisconsin extension horticulturist.

"Plants are sturdy, vigorous and hardy. Fruit is firm and medium-sized with good quality," Klingbeil says.

Average ripening date for the first fruit is September 1, but plants will continue producing fruit until killing frost destroys the blossoms. However, it's not uncommon for Heritage to bear ripe fruit into late October.

Trials conducted around the state indicate that Heritage does best in southern Wisconsin--south of a line from Green Bay, Oshkosh, and LaCrosse--along the Mississippi and other locations protected from early fall frost.

Klingbeil offers the following management techniques for hastening fruit maturity and increasing the fall crop:

- Manage this cultivar as a fall-bearing variety. Since new spring canes bear fall fruit, you can cut all canes down to ground level each winter.
- Cutting down canes eliminates next season's summer fruit crop but encourages larger canes and earlier fruit ripening the following fall. This management technique eliminates the need for normal pruning. It also reduces rabbit damage and common raspberry insect and disease problems.

Fall Red and Fall Gold are two other fall-bearing raspberry cultivars adapted to southern Wisconsin. Fall Red is satisfactory, but the fruit is smaller and softer than Heritage.

Fall Gold, a yellow or golden fruited variety, has medium-sized, firm, sweet, amber-colored fruit. Klingbeil recommends this cultivar if you prefer the yellow-fruited variety.

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NOTE!

ANNUAL MEETING OF MINNESOTA BERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Following the program the Minnesota Berry Growers Association will hold its annual meeting at the Student Center, March 22. All members and prospective members are urged to stay for this meeting. Anyone wishing to become a part of this association will have an opportunity to join then.

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