

Strawberries



Strawberries are the only fruit that have their seeds on the outside. They are also part of the rose family. Here in the United States, we have over 58,000 acres of land dedicated to growing strawberries. In Illinois, there are 206 acres of strawberries.

Depending on the farm size, an acre can produce 5,000 pounds to 25 tons of strawberries in the United States. Illinois' growing season for strawberries is between April and June. June is the ideal month for strawberry picking.



Strawberries are the perfect healthy snack, containing high levels of Vitamin C. Strawberries are popular all over the world. In the United states, they are eaten a variety of different ways. Strawberries are enjoyed fresh, frozen, freeze dried, and in jam, ice cream, and pies.



Strawberries grow on perennial vines. Once a plant becomes fruit bearing, it will remain active for 5 years. Each year, once the plant starts to bloom again, there is a white flower that blooms. The flower allows the strawberry plant to be pollinated. Between 28 to 42 days after the flowers bloom, the berries are ready to harvest.



Meet the Purdoms

Cody's Farm & Orchard | Marengo, IL

Tell us about your farm.

Cody's Farm & Orchard began small in the early 1990s with Cody selling sweet corn in his grandmother's front yard. We have grown into a permanent farm market on our farm in Marengo, IL with the partnership of Cody's parents, Don and Sharon, and Cody's wife, Valerie. Our farm market is operated June to October every year. We grow strawberries, sweet corn, various vegetables, apples, and pumpkins. Pick your own strawberries were added to our farm in 2009.

How and when do you grow and harvest strawberries?

We plant about 1-2 acres of new strawberry plants each spring. These strawberries will not be able to be harvested until the following June. Strawberry harvest usually begins around the 2nd week of June. Harvest continues about 2 - 4 weeks, depending on the weather and berry crop.

What do you do with your strawberries once they are harvested?

Strawberries are hand-harvested and sold in our farm market. We also offer u-pick strawberries where customers can come to our farm and pick their own strawberries.

How do you take care of your strawberry plants in the off-season?

Once the strawberry season has ended for the year, the strawberry plants are mowed off and we have to go through the rows with a machine called a multivator which narrows the rows back to a specific size. We still fertilize the plants and spray for weeds when the plants are dormant. Before winter sets in, we cover all the rows of strawberries with straw to protect the plants. In the spring, we rake the straw off the plants and it goes between the rows to create a nice straw area for kneeling to pick the strawberries. Strawberry plants remain in production for about 3 years before the plants are plowed under as production and size of the strawberry decreases around this time.