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HOW TO GROW
The World's Greatest EVERBEARING Strawberry

MASTODON

By
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Benton Harbor, Mich.

Abide by and follow these essential factors if you wish the best results in growing Mastodon Everbearing Strawberries:

1. Set the plants early in well prepared soil, preferably a rich, sunny, sandy loam.
2. Prepare the soil as far as possible in advance of setting the plants.
3. Set the plants early—as soon as you would make early garden.
5. At no time should the plants be in want for water or food—don't let them "cry for something to eat and drink."
6. Keep the blossoms picked off for about 60 days after plants are set then allow them to form and develop into berries. From blossom to ripe berries takes about 30 days.
7. Cultivate or mulch the soil so that it is always mellow, moist and free from weeds. Irrigate where possible.
8. All manure or commercial fertilizer should be thoroughly mixed with the soil. Avoid layers, plugs, etc., of it through the soil or in the bottom of the furrow.

SOILS. Any soil that grows a good paying crop of corn, oats, potatoes, etc., will grow Mastodon successfully, but the most ideal is a rich, moist, cool, sandy loam. Gravelly or clay loams will also grow Mastodon successfully, but more organic matter must be added to make them more open and workable. Organic matter can be applied in the form of straw, fodder, leaves, etc.—the more decayed, the better.

Regardless of the kind of soil they are set in, the plant should never be allowed to want for water and food. Keep them always in a rich, vigorous condition. Since moisture is one of the necessary requisites for successful Mastodon culture, select, when possible, a rich sandy loam soil underlain to a depth of one to two feet with a "water sand." Such a soil is always moist and cool.

SOIL PREPARATION. Thorough preparation is very essential. It should be done as far in advance of planting as possible. Freshly prepared soil, left in an open, loose condition at time of planting, will not hold moisture like soil prepared early and allowed time to settle.

With the help of heavy soils, it is well to prepare soil for Mastodon late the Fall before, by plowing or spading it 8 to 10 inches deep and allowing it to remain in a rough, unharrowed condition over winter. Early the following spring, it should be deeply disked, harrowed and made smooth and ready for planting. By following this system the sandy loams or lighter soils will be in the best condition for successful results.

Where it is found necessary to prepare soil in the spring, do so as far as possible in advance of planting. Apply a liberal amount of manure and plow or spade 8 to 10 inches deep. Follow this up with a bed of manure or roe, then disk, harrow and roll until the soil-bed is firm. Disk or harrow enough often thereafter to keep the soil well worked up and free from weeds, and just before planting, smooth the surface for convenience in marking out rows and planting.

An early, thoroughly prepared soil pays big. Don't neglect this essential.

ENRICHING THE SOIL. If you are to grow two quarts of berries where one was grown before, give the plants twice as much water and food as you did before. Many growers overlook this fact.

Barnyard (stable) manures are considered best for enriching soils for strawberries—sheep, cow, horse, or pig manures, are all good, but any of them should contain considerable amounts of rotted straw or other organic matter. Sheep and hog manures are very rich and should be used in about one-half the amounts given for horse and cow manures.

To average soil, broadcast 15 to 20 wagon loads per acre, (4 to 5 bushels per square rod), of cow or horse manure as far ahead of plowing as possible and disk well into the top layers of soil before plowing under. This will get the plant foods of the manure more evenly and thoroughly mixed with the soil than if the manuring was turned directly under and laid flat in the bottom of the furrow in unbroken form.

After plowing, while the soil is still in a rough, unharrowed condition, apply 7 to 10 wagon loads per acre, (2 to 3 bushels per square rod), of fine, well-rotted manure, which will be thoroughly mixed with the top layer of soil by disking, harrowing, etc. Harrow, disk, and roll until you have the soil in top-garden shape.

COMMERCIAL FERTILIZER. On the average soil use 1500 to 2000 pounds of a 2-8-10 fertilizer per acre. On poorer soils use the same amount of a 4-4-10. Figure at the same rate, the amount to apply on garden soils would be 10 to 12 pounds per square rod. Apply about one-third of the total amount before harrowing, one-third shortly after plants are set, and the remaining one-third about 30 days later. In applying fertilizer along the rows, keep the roughest edge of the fertilizer about 6 inches from the rows and do not double or curl them up at the ends. Make the holes deep enough to prevent this. Set the plant so the bud or crown tip is just even with the surface of the soil, no deeper, no shallower. Pack the soil firmly about the roots so it is in contact with all of them. Use the heel. There should be no air space around nor below the roots. This is very important.

KEEPING OFF THE BLOSSOMS. Newly set plants should not be allowed to blossom for 60 days. Pinch them off as soon as they are noticed in the crowns of the plants.

CULTIVATION. Start cultivating and hoeing shortly after the plants are set and keep it up all summer, not allowing crusts to form or the soil to become hard after rains. Shallow (2½ inches) cultivation is best. It would be well to cultivate or stir the soil about the plants or between the rows once a week.

MULCHING AROUND PLANTS. By placing straw, chaff, or other material around plants to a depth of 2 or 3 inches, the soil beneath can be kept moist and cool. The berries will also be held off the soil and will not be smoothed over the rains. Mulches should not be disturbed during cultivation or hoeing. If material is available, it is often advisable to mulch between the rows as well as around the plants.

IRRIGATION. Where water is available, I recommend, or supplying the plants with needed water in some way, is very essential.

Water can be supplied to the plants by digging a shallow trench (3-4 inches) on either side of the row about 6 inches from the plants, and filling these trenches full of water in the evening. After it has soaked well into the soil so there is no danger of "paddling" the soil in the trench, draw the soil back into the trenches leaving a smooth surface. This can be done every morning. Repeat as often as necessary to keep the plants vigorous, fresh and thriving.

Mastodon blossoms contain both pistils and stamens, and if they are perfect, and do not require other varieties to fertilize them, they will blossom and develop their berries as well away from as near other varieties.
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Commission Merchant Likes to Sell Mastodon

There is no question but what the Mastodon is the largest berry ever yet produced—and they are just as highly flavored and sweet as they are big. And the berries are very firm, retaining their fine, firm condition when other varieties become soft and unappetizing. Our commission merchant, Mr. M. Guggenheim of South Water Street, Chicago, states:

"Giantness—
These are the delicious strawberries in the selling of your Mastodon Everbearing Strawberries. We have never had the pleasure of handling any clusters of strawberries anywhere in the entire world. The flavor is simply wonderful, good quality, showing a marvelous flavor, and the color and flavor is unequal for any of the everbearing varieties. These seem to mature color and flavor and size and quality of the product in every direction." M. Guggenheim, South Water Street, Chicago.

This farmer sold our Mastodon Berries for 100 a crate (50 lb.)

Prominent Men Praise Mastodon

If the Mastodon, "The National Editor, Farm Journal, Philadelphia, Pa." said:

"I have had the pleasure of picking off the bunches of these strawberries in the home of friends and my friends and I have picked enough berries at one time from four plants for a week. We are still picking them and the plants still going. I must say they are the best strawberries I have ever tasted."

L. S. Gold, Better Homes and Gardens, Des Moines.

"The quality of the Mastodon plants sent was excellent. With a normal season, I can expect a remarkable yield which I have never secured. As it was the full crop of plants from the Mastodon strain, I can only hope to pick up a box of dainty, delicious, plants for pickling.

Ben. Stanley H. Kuni, Congressmen, Chicago, Ill., Home bureau.

"The berries are simply delicious and very large." Mr. N. R. Rosenthal, National Representative, Well Points.

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