

# how to grow strawberries

**There is nothing more satisfying than picking juicy sweet strawberries from your very own garden. They are one of the easiest fruits to grow – anyone can grow them!**

**Strawberries are also a great plant to introduce children to gardening; give them their own strawberry patch or pot to take care of and they will love the reward of delicious fruit for their efforts.**

## Choosing the Right Variety

Below are three of the most common and best home-garden strawberry varieties to grow. You can also extend your strawberry season through the type of varieties you grow and their different fruiting periods.



### **Camarosa**

Has large firm fruit and produces from early spring. It tolerates cooler, moist conditions so is ideal for southerly regions.

### **Pajaro**

A popular commercial variety that produces consistent heavy crops with excellent colour and flavour.

### **Camino Real**

High yielding plants which produce abundant sweet flavoured dark red fruit throughout the season and extending beyond the normal strawberry fruiting time.

## Planting

Strawberries need maximum sun and maximum heat to produce sweet juicy fruit. Choose a warm sunny location with well drained soil. You can source established strawberry plants from your local supplier and start planting from late June through to early spring for a bumper summer crop. Established strawberry plants will produce runners which are baby strawberry plants towards the end of the growing season. Snip off runners from the mother plant and plant out anytime during May, June and July to give them enough time to get established. They need one season before they fruit. Make sure to remove any dead or damaged leaves from your runners before planting.

## Planting tips

- 1 Plan your garden so your strawberry plants sit north to south, to allow for even ripening.
- 2 Prepare your strawberry patch by enriching the soil with **Daltons Garden Time™ Strawberry Mix**. As a guide, try and work it in to 1 ½ spade depth.
- 3 Mound the soil into rows and place strawberry plants in the ground approximately 15cm apart. Mounding the soil improves drainage and allows the soil to warm up quicker and maintain this warmth throughout the growing period.
- 4 Make sure the crown (just below the leaves) of the plant is sitting slightly higher than ground level. Then add plenty of **Daltons Mulch & Grow** or **Coir Mulch Blocks** around the plants.
- 5 As they come into flower cover the plants with bird netting to ensure that they don't get to the fruit before you do!

## Professional tips with Xanthe White

**“Strawberry plant selection is important to ensure resistance to pests and diseases. I highly recommend the incredible *edibles*® range, whose plants are chosen for flavour and performance in the home garden. Good plant breeding and selection produces plants that perform for local conditions, so it is worth spending money on a local variety rather than overseas-selected hybrids.”**





## Growing Strawberries in Containers

If you have limited space you can successfully grow strawberries in pots or containers.

- Fill the container with **Daltons Garden Time™ Strawberry Mix** – it contains slow release nutrients and has moisture retaining qualities which are particularly important when growing in pots.
- It's a good idea to change the soil in pots or containers every time you want to grow a new crop, as it can get depleted.
- Apply a layer of mulch on top to help moisture retention.
- Position your pots or containers in a warm sunny, north facing position, away from strong winds.

## Watering and Feeding

### Watering your Strawberries

Water your strawberries regularly (especially those in containers), but as they come into the growing season keep plants moist without over watering them. This is especially important when the strawberry crop is ripening to avoid having tasteless watery fruit. Over-watering can also lead to Botrytis, a grey fungus mould which affects the fruit.

### Feeding your Strawberries

A good strawberry mix like **Daltons Garden Time™ Strawberry Mix** contains adequate nutrients so you should only need to apply fertiliser in the early months of the season. Apply a side dressing of **Daltons Garden Time™ Strawberry Fertiliser** in October and November to encourage good strong growth. Be careful not to over fertilise your strawberry plants as this can lead to an enormous amount of green leaf growth instead of fruit.

## Pests, Diseases and General Maintenance

Generally after about two years a strawberry plants fruit production can start to slow down and they can be susceptible to a particular virus that is lethal to the plant.

To avoid this and ensure a continual succession of cropping of strawberries it is good practice to replace plants within two years.

One of the secrets to successful strawberries is regular mulching. Not only does it help with water management, but also once fruit develops, it helps to keep them clean, dry, and off the soil, thereby reducing fruit rot.

Strawberries do not like to compete with any other plants so maintain good garden practices and keep the area weed free.

## Gardening Terms Explained

### Free draining soil

Soil that is light and well broken up. Water can penetrate the soil and drain without pooling.

### Mounding

Means to create mounds (small hills) of soil to plant into. Mounding improves drainage and increases soil temperatures.

### Mulching

A top layer of organic matter such as coir, wood chip or pea straw so the soil and plant are protected from the elements. This keeps moisture in during summer months and keeps the soil warm during colder months.

### Replacement planting/or succession planting

Planting the same plant again as the previous one comes to an end.

### Runners

These are cuttings from an established plant and can be planted out – however they need at least one season to get established before they fruit.

### Side dressing

Means to apply fertiliser to the soil on or around the sides of the plant.



## Products to try

Besgrow Coir Mulch Blocks | Daltons Mulch & Grow  
Daltons Garden Time™ Strawberry Mix | Daltons Garden Time™ Strawberry Fertiliser