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Fresh Market Strawberry Bulletin

June 23, 2016

Day Neutrals dominate production.

With such an early season, June bearing is all but finished and Day Neutrals will keep fresh, local strawberries available until the end of the berry season. It gets to this point in the season when Spotted Wing Drosophila, Thrips and Lygus Bug threaten production. Scout and sample plants/fruit for these pests.

OSU Strawberry Field Day 2016





Photos: Top: Drs. Chad Finn and Bernadine Strik. Middle left: Ted Mackey and Wendy Hoashi-Erhardt tasting strawberries. Middle right: Some of the strawberry cultivar samples offered at the field day. Bottom: Participants walking through the latest advanced selections and new cultivars in the strawberry breeding plots.

On June 8th, the Oregon State University Research and Extension Center held its annual Strawberry Field Day, which is a chance for growers, researchers, and industry members to gather and share their work and studies. Dr. Bernadine Strik hosted the event.

“Application of Biodegradable Mulches in Day-Neutral Strawberries Grown in Western Washington” (Curtis Faustich, M.S. Graduate student and Dr. Lisa DeVetter, NWREC, WSU)

The day opened with a presentation on biodegradable mulches in day neutral strawberries. M.S. graduate student Curtis Faustich and Dr. Lisa DeVetter presented a report of their research on alternatives to the black plastic mulch that is commonly used as a mulch for fresh market strawberries. While the currently used black plastic covering is inexpensive, it is time consuming and costly to remove from fields. Faustich and DeVetter aim to find a replacement mulch that can be tilled into the soil and will degrade after growers are finished using it. Faustich and DeVetter have experimented with paper, cornstarch, and bacteria fermentation products as replacements for the plastic mulch. So far, some of these materials are more prone to tearing than plastic is, but they seem to do an efficient job at weed control and keeping the soil warm though higher cost of product is a factor.

***“Late-Summer Establishment of Day-Neutrals – Getting a Spring Crop in the First Year”
(Eric Gerbrandt, B.C., Canada)***

Eric Gerbrandt, based in B.C, Canada, followed the mulch discussion with his day-neutral planting time research findings. Production enhancement the first season after planting was the goal when trialing different planting times for both bare root and tissue culture plants. He found that planting late summer was superior to planting mid-spring based on yields during the first and second growing seasons. He also noted that runner propagated plants "burned out" in the second year when planted mid-spring, but late summer planting of these plants proved to give the plants enough time to establish without being exhausted by the second season. These findings lead to an opportunity for increasing overall yields based on the best planting time for the region.

“Weed control trials in strawberry – options for growers” (Dr. Tim Miller, NWREC, WSU)

Tim Miller presented his research updates from a newly planted strawberry not labelled herbicide trial and an established strawberry not labelled herbicide trial. The newly planted trial had poor weed control compared to the hand-weeded plots, primarily due to the extremely dry conditions following the herbicide application. Herbicides applied post-transplant had visual strawberry injury noticed by August, including Alion, Alion + Spartan, Treevix + Dual Magnum, and Chateau treatments that caused greater than 10% visual injury, although they weren't statistically different. Trellis, Reflex, Fierce, and Dual Magnum remain excellent candidates for registration in newly planted strawberry. Alion and Treevix are also good choices for additional testing, though Bayer doesn't have any interest in registering Alion in perennial strawberry at this time.

The established strawberry treatments had variable injury. Early herbicide damage was caused by Chateau tank mixes, Treevix tank mixes and Fierce alone or in tank mixture. Fierce alone caused the greatest injury. Chickweed control was excellent to begin with and waned by berry harvest. There was no significant difference in fruit size, though difference in yield was noted.

“In Memoriam – Whitey Lawrence’s legacy and beyond in the USDA-ARS/OSU Strawberry Breeding Program” (Dr. Chad Finn, USDA-ARS, HCRU, Corvallis)

As a special part of the agenda, Dr. Chad Finn shared some history and memories about the late Whitey Lawrence's legacy in the USDA-ARS/OSU Strawberry Breeding Program. Whitey was involved in the strawberry industry even after he retired, and his work was essential to today's breeding program.

Refreshment Break Provided by Brian Yorgey, Dept. Food Sci. & Tech., OSU

As a mid-afternoon break, Brian Yorgey and the OSU Department of Food Science and Technology provided taste tests of about 20 new fresh strawberry cultivars. They also offered some of these selections over ice cream as a topping. This gave everyone a chance to discuss the varieties in terms of size, taste, color, and overall appearance.

“A DNA test for remontancy” (Dr. Jason Zurn, Postdoc, USDA-ARS-NCGR)

Dr. Jason Zurn explained the perpetual flowering genetics that are highly sought after in cultivars. This is research that is being conducted under the RosBREED project, which combines disease resistance with horticultural quality in new strawberry and other rosaceous cultivars. Continual floral initiation is usually determined by photoperiod, temperature and genetics of the cultivar, and it gives the cultivar great economic value. From a genetics standpoint, the FaPFRU locus, particularly the Bx215 marker located close to this genetic locus, is the perpetual flowering genetic link associated cultivars like Tribute and Seascape. DNA testing for strawberries continues to determine what populations have this perpetual flowering allele. Under the right temperature conditions, breeders can realize up to 80% perpetual flowering using the Bx215 allele DNA test.

"Fresh Market Trial Selections - OSC Block Grant Update" (Julie Pond, Peerbolt Crop Management)

Next, Julie Pond from Peerbolt Crop Management presented an overview of promising fresh market trial selections that the Oregon Strawberry Commission is testing as a part of a specialty crop block grant. Unger Farms is growing these selections, and they will be evaluated in-field by Peerbolt Crop Management. Ann Colonna of Oregon State University's Food Innovation Center will then coordinate two taste tests with consumers. One taste test will be in June and the second in August of 2017. Both tests will take place at the Food Innovation Center and New Seasons Market. These new varieties will be compared to industry variety standards ('Albion' and 'Hood') and consumers will have the opportunity to learn the vast range of attributes that strawberry cultivars exhibit.

"Evaluate and walk through the latest advanced selections and new cultivars in the strawberry breeding plots" (Dr. Chad Finn, USDA-ARS; Dr. Pat Moore, WSU)

The day ended with a tour of the Extension Center's breeding plots. Dr. Chad Finn gave a field tour of the day-neutral and June-bearing strawberry cultivars. The audience was able to pick ripe fruit, examine the plants, and discuss the pros and cons of the cultivars that Dr. Finn grew.

Click the image below for a video of the event by Brooke Edmunds of Oregon State University Extension Service.



Strawberry-related News

- [Mechanical planting of strawberry transplants](#) (6/19, You Tube)
- [Hundreds of California strawberry growers to lose jobs](#) (6/17, Fresh Plaza-U.S.)
- [Better weather leads to better strawberries](#) (6/15, The Packer)

Archived Bulletins

- 06/09/2016 - [OSC Bulletin 06-09-16: Updates from Local Buyers](#)

- 05/26/2016 - [OSC Bulletin: Harvest Updates from Growers, 05-26-16](#)
- 05/12/2016 - [OSC Bulletin, PT. 2: Selling Your Fresh Market Strawberries, 05-12-16](#)

Go [here](#) for all other bulletins.

Upcoming Events

July 15 & 16 — Oregon Berry Festival Portland, OR. Go [here](#) for details.

For more information on fresh market production and resources, check out the [OSC website](#).

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This bulletin edited and sent by [Peerbolt Crop Management](#). For questions or inquiries about signing up, contact the office: 503-289-7287 or pcm@peerbolt.com
