

Five Renovation Steps for Strawberries

Many strawberry growers think of renovation as a time to clean up their weed problems but it is much more than that. In fact, the primary purpose of renovation is to re-establish a healthy, vigorous stand of plants so that a high yield potential for the next crop can be obtained. Fruit bud initiation begins in mid-August so to optimize this important process, renovation needs to occur as soon as possible after harvest. With this in mind the following five steps outline the renovation process:

1. Application of post-emergent herbicides

- Venture L and Poast Ultra for grasses – apply after mowing when grasses have regrown to the two to five leaf stage and do not apply with Sinbar, or within two weeks of Sinbar application. Annual bluegrass is not susceptible.
- 2,4-D Amine and Lontrel for broadleaf weeds – apply 2,4-D Amine 4-6 days before mowing and Lontrel 7-10 days before mowing. Lontrel is more effective than 2,4-D in controlling vetch, sheep sorrel, daisy, groundsel, yarrow, mayweed (scentless chamomile), cudweed, ragweed, smartweed, thistle, nightshade and wild buckwheat.

2. Mowing strawberry leaves

- stimulates early initiation of fruit buds
- controls plant density resulting in larger fruit size
- can reduce inoculum levels for certain leaf diseases and botrytis fruit rot

3. Fertilizer application

- broadcast over row 300-400 kg/ha of 17-17-17 or 150-200 kg/ha of ammonium nitrate (34-0-0) depending on soil test reports

4. Narrowing rows

- narrow rows to 12 inches in vigorous plantings with plant densities from 6-8 plants per square foot. In less vigour plantings with thinner densities, or in colder areas that experience significant winter injury, narrow to 18 inches.

5. Adequate irrigation and rainfall

- essential for regrowth and runnering

For more information, please contact a Horticulture Crop Specialist (902) 678-7722.