



Strawberry (*Fragaria ananassa*)

Horticulture Research Institute is involved in strawberry runner production and these are ready for distribution from March every year.

Planting date: Field planting can be done from February – May for fruiting in Sept –December.

Soil type: Deep well drained soils are desirable.

Spacing: Plants should be established on raised beds or ridges spaced at 90cm. Between plants spacing of 30cmx40cm is normally used.

Planting: To plant, trim roots to about 10cm. Leave about 2-3 leaves to minimise transpiration. Spread roots covering them with soil. Set the crown just above the ground level. Plant in moist soil and irrigate immediately after planting. Plant during the cool times of the day. Mulching materials could be UV stabilised black or clear plastic, straw and rye grass. This helps to keep fruit clean as well as conserving moisture and suppressing weeds.

Fertilisation: Soil analysis is recommended.

Cultural practises: select a frost free site. Can be grown in tunnels. Runners should be removed or thinned to improve fruit quality and avoid overcrowding.

Pests and diseases: Common insect pests include aphids, white grubs, bugs and mites. Chemical control is recommended as well as soil fumigation. Leaf spot can be controlled by Captan and other fungicides. Botrytis is a major cause of postharvest loss attacking fruit during wet periods. Botrytis is controlled by fungicides.

Harvesting: Should be done at red ripe stage (130-135 days after planting. Harvesting may last for 2-3 months. Pick the fruit with the stalk attached. Place fruits in punnets and cool them to remove field heat.

Markets. Local, retail shops, hotels, export

