

My garden goals

HOME GARDENING STRAWBERRIES



RENOVATING MY STRAWBERRY PATCH

A crucial step in maintaining a productive berry patch is renovating. This is a 3 step process performed each year as soon after harvest as possible that rejuvenates your planting and is essential if you want to have a long lived productive patch.

Step 1: Set the mower blade on your lawn mower at a setting that will remove the leaves from the strawberry plant but won't damage the crowns. Trimming off the old leaves will decrease the disease problems for the rest of the summer. If this step is delayed and runners begin to grow, skip this step. Waiting too long to mow off the leaves will damage next year's yield.

Step 2: Lightly fertilize your patch with a balanced 12-12-12 fertilizer at 2 lbs. per square feet.

Step 3: Till between the rows narrowing down the row to 10 to 12 inches. This is very hard for many people as they think they are destroying their patch.

Thinning or narrowing the row will keep your plants healthy and productive by allowing more sunlight and airflow throughout the row.

After renovation, keep your planting free of weeds and mulch with straw in the fall. In the late fall, after 3 hard frosts or a hard freeze, you should cover your planting with a straw mulch. This is typically around Thanksgiving in northern Indiana. This protects the plants from extreme winter cold as well as moderating the temperature to stabilize the plants environment. Mulch the plants by shaking the straw evenly over the row until you can no longer see any of the green of the plant through the covering straw. Remove all new runners that form after mid-August as these will not have time to peg and produce a good plant. Repeat each year for many years of great strawberries. Once you see a significant decrease in yield from one year to the next it is time to replant. For some people this is every 3 years but for others it can be every 5 to 7 years.

