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ORDER ONLINE:

noursefarms.com

FOR PHONE ORDERS OR CUSTOMER SERVICE:

(413) 665-2658
 Monday–Friday
 8am to 5pm (EST)

**IMPORTANT!
 SHIP DATES**

With increasingly variable and inconsistent spring weather, we highly recommend growers delay shipping or place spring orders with an “OPEN” ship date. Calling by Wednesday the week before you need the plants will allow us time to prepare your shipment and get it on its way to you. Your plants will not arrive before weather and soil conditions are suitable.

GREETINGS FROM NOURSE FARMS!

A recent report on agricultural sales showed farm direct sales in the US are 4 billion dollars, half that came from the North East quadrant of the US. Continued growth is certain as demand for locally grown berries isn't being met. Nourse Farms berry production exceeded record levels and I still had to say no to new customers because current customers bought all the surplus production. I suggest growers looking for new markets talk to local co-ops and CSA's, these customers buy during the mid week, allowing our regular customers to receive more on the weekends.

One of the biggest grower issues we regularly hear regards plant health maintenance. In the most severe cases, growers are not able to plant in new areas. Others follow crops like corn, beans, or pumpkins. In both cases, planting green manure crops can break the cycle. A good first step is to consider a brassica crop such as mustard planted in mid to late July to reduce nematodes. Taking another step would be a planting of Sorghum Sudan grass in late May. Adding to that would be 2 full years of green manure crops prior to planting. At Nourse Farms, we follow a three year rotation with two full years of green manure crops prior to planting berries again. We would be happy to discuss these and other options.

Every spring has challenging issues for many of our growers. Normal planting dates can be extended for many reasons. Be confident that we will do whatever necessary to deliver plants on your schedule. We hold plants for customers under optimal conditions, allowing them to express their very best potential no matter how late they find the soil. I receive many comments about plants showing signs of life and growing the next day after planting. Allowing plants to start in warmer conditions creates a momentum that will last through the year. Please see our article on page 2 about receiving and storing plants.

Our sales staff have been honing their skills; we have learned a lot this winter and are eager to share the knowledge. Two Spotted Spider mites have been causing problems for many growers throughout North America due to warm dry fall weather. An article with our recommendations for the most effective treatments follows. Whatever needs or questions you have for the coming season, we are ready to serve you to the best of our ability.

Nate Nourse



Nate (left), Mary and Tim Nourse

RECEIVING AND STORING PLANTS

by NATE NOURSE

Nourse Farms' commitment to on-time delivery is second to none. We schedule ship dates by week and make every effort to ensure packages arrive at their destination prior to the weekend. Please consider your ship date carefully. If you are not prepared to plant or if the soil conditions or the weather forecast indicate poor planting conditions, you can and should call us, 4 business days before the scheduled ship date, to postpone the shipment.

Although we are unable to call every customer to confirm you are ready to plant or monitor weather conditions across the country, we do have a free shipment notification process set up via e-mail. If you provide us with a current e-mail address, you will receive a reminder of your upcoming shipment at least two Fridays before the scheduled ship date. This gives you time to call or e-mail any changes to the order or postpone the delivery. You will get a second notification with tracking information once the plants have shipped.

We realize many customers have received plants before they were ready and successfully stored them for 2 weeks or more. While there are many success stories and plants can be held in refrigeration if you are unable to plant immediately, we recommend planting within a few days of arrival for the healthiest start for your plants. Another option is to leave the ship date "open" and call to let us know when you are ready. Notifying us early the week before will guarantee shipment the following week.

We make every effort to accommodate last minute requests, but during the busiest part of the shipping season, be mindful that

we may already have a few thousand cartons scheduled to ship that week. If you need to change an existing order, please try to give us several business days to make any changes to your order or delay the packing and shipping. We try to have 75% of all packages scheduled for shipping loaded on a delivery truck before 9:00 a.m. Monday, Eastern Standard Time. Exceptions include LTL and pooled truck shipments. LTL shipments can be loaded after 3:00 pm, but must be scheduled before noon. Pooled trucks are loaded in the morning; adjustments must be made several days in advance.

Inspecting plants upon arrival is a great way to insure success. Opening boxes will allow plants to cool if they got warm in transit. If you have received green, leafy plug plants, they will require special care. Non-dormant plug plants coming directly out of our greenhouse will have a few green leaves and will be very sensitive to frost. Look through your carton(s) for the Planting Success Guide for instructions on caring for these plants starting at opening the carton(s). Warning: Only plant green, plug plants after danger of frost has passed! If dormant plants are cool or cold, reseal the carton(s) and store them as close to 28°F as possible. A temperature of 26°F or colder will kill your new plants. Do not allow plants to go below 27°F. Do not add water or soak your new plants until you are ready to put them in the ground. If plants are moldy or have a funny smell, do not plant them and notify us immediately. Asparagus crowns must be kept dry as well as cool. A little light mold that brushes off easily is fairly common. If you cannot find your enclosed Planting Success Guide, visit our website and you will find a link to the booklet on the left side of any page.

It is our goal to accommodate every request and ensure a timely delivery that works well for you and your new plants! Help us plan your successful delivery and planting. If you are at all unsure about the condition of any of your plants upon arrival, immediately give us a call!

STRAWBERRY TRIAL UPDATES

by TIM NOURSE

June-Bearing Strawberry Variety

YAMBU *U.S. Plant Patent Pending*

We offered Yambu in the 2016 Newsletter, but it was called Rumba. The correct name is Yambu. Sorry for this confusion.

Yambu was released by Fresh Forward in the Netherlands and bred by Burt Meulenbroek. Bert also bred the variety Sonata.

Yambu is an early-midseason variety which has a ripening season similar to Honeoye in the Netherlands. In our trials, it ripened a few days later than Honeoye. Plants are vigorous with dark green color and we have experienced no foliage disease pressure. Fruits are very attractive with bright red color, uniform shape and glossy skin. Berries are firm with red internal color and good flavor.

Nourse Farms has tested Yambu in our fruiting trials for several seasons and have experienced it to be a high performing variety with a long picking season, and good yield potential. During this time Yambu has demonstrated that it does not have any special nutrient requirements. We highly recommend Yambu because of its excellent characteristics we experienced.

There are still plants of Yambu available for planting this spring and we highly recommend it be trialed in your production because of its excellent features.

Day-Neutral Strawberry Variety

VERITY *U.S. Plant Patent Pending*

We have offered Verity as a trial variety for two years now and will continue to offer it for 2017. When I first saw Verity growing and producing in the U.K., I felt it had great potential for our northern day-neutral producers. The color and glossy appearance of the fruit and ease of harvest are Verity's interesting characteristics. But I think its outstanding flavor is an important characteristic that can't be overlooked. We have recently learned that it needs to be fed very aggressively to achieve its high yield potential. This would correspond to the higher rates of fertility used for Albion. Proper fertilizing will increase the size of the plants and result in higher yields without effecting fruit firmness and post-harvest standability.

The popularity of Verity has grown with growers producing in open fields without covers. This is because the ripening fruit can tolerate outside conditions. As most of our customers' day-neutral production is in open fields, I think this is an important consideration.

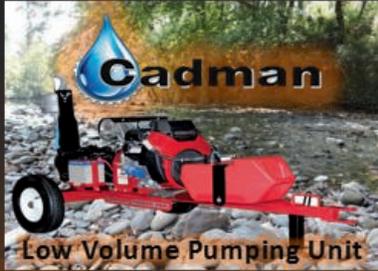
I encourage you to plant Verity because of this new information and the fruit characteristics it possesses. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.



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Hillside Cultivator for weed control throughout the year

Weed control is probably the most difficult obstacle to successful strawberry production. In a matted row system a combination of effective mechanical tools will greatly reduce hand labor. The Hillside Cultivator incorporates several tools for the different stages of growth. Timing is always critical.



- The **Finger Weeder** attachment can be used all season for disrupting small weed growth along the row and close to plants. (pictured left)
- **S-tines** mounted in the front position are used to move runners into the row. (pictured above)
- **Rolling cultivator** gangs are part of the cultivator in all seasons and are excellent for uprooting weeds while not cultivating too deeply.

- The **Eco Weeder** is a separate machine. PTO driven rotating vertical teeth are manually moved between and around young plants. Pictured here in a broccoli field, the Eco Weeder is very helpful in young strawberries. An attachment is available for straw removal in the spring.



- Through the late summer and into the fall, the width of the strawberry row can be controlled with the **rolling cultivators** and weeds between the row removed. These cultivations can remain shallow so that new weed seeds are not brought to the surface. Cultivation can also be done as an herbicide loses its effectiveness and prior to another low rate application.

- Following harvest and mowing the plants, the Hillside Cultivator is ideal for strawberry renovation. **Disk gangs** are mounted in the front position which are used to narrow the row and cut through the straw. A **coil tine** follows and fractures the soil which has been packed by foot traffic during harvest. The rolling cultivator in the rear rolls soil back toward the strawberry plants. Cultivating speed is 3-4 mph with two passes normal for each row. This machine is more economical and less disruptive of soil structure than a rototiller.



- Other uses for the cultivator include cultivating the edges of plastic
- Vegetables such as Pumpkins, Squash, Potatoes, and Cole Crops.

Contact: **John E. Shenk, Hillside Cultivator Co. LLC**

911 Disston View Dr. Lititz, PA 17543

Phone 717-626-6194 Cell 717-669-3158

www.hillsidecultivator.com email: shenkberrymfarm@gmail.com

Early-Season Two Spotted Spider Mite Control and Predator Release

by NATE NOURSE

Since 1993, Nourse Farms has been releasing mite predators in strawberry fruiting fields. In that time, we have only seen Two Spotted Spider Mites cause economic damage to the point of needing a Miticide application during 2 of those seasons. I have gotten so comfortable with this program that I don't even bother to scout for Two Spot most of the time. Normally, I release on the windward edges and next to dusty roads. Hint: Regarding the dusty roads along the strawberry field – Two Spot loves this condition any time of the growing season. Predator application is similar to setting a brush fire. I start at one corner and apply on 2 connecting sides of the field. By concentrating the release in 1-2 rows and the equivalent space on the ends on the rows, the predators will clean up and move across the field.

Most will recommend application rates from 10-20,000 predators per acre, I would do this under extreme conditions. Depending on the pressure, I will only use 3-5,000 per acre in my system. I usually order ½ Persimilis and ½ Californicus or Fallacis. The Persimilis are like rabbits and will move across an area very quickly. The Californicus and Fallacis are like turtles and move slow and steady. The combination works well for both reasons. If I end up with a few extra, I will apply to the ends of some cane berry rows. Most of the time, the predators will find the Two Spot in other crops on their own.

I usually try to time the application after the first or second bloom spray, just 2-3 days later. Then wait a minimum of 7 days before the next pesticide application. Most predators will lay 1-2 eggs per day, increasing population quickly. Most insecticides don't bother predators, but you should check the pesticide label to make sure that it is predator friendly. All pyrethrin's are not predator friendly. Control of plant bugs is essential and would require coordination of your predator friendly insecticides and miticides. I waited for the predators one year and lost a lot of production. Hopefully, this never happens again. For organic controls, refer to the labeled alternatives available.

Don't wait to pull the trigger, miticide use should occur before sample leaves reach five Two Spot per leaf. Two sequential applications will almost always take care of the problem. Applying predators 24-48 hours after a miticide or insecticide application shouldn't affect the predators. Waiting ten days before the next insecticide application will allow enough eggs to be laid that predators will survive to hatch and continue working. We have used Portal, Nealta, Abamectin, Zeal, Acramite, Kanemite, Savy, and Vendex. Some of these products need water conditioning and the use of proper adjuvants helps with coverage or penetration. Reading and understanding the label will explain the growth stage targeted by the product.

PREDATOR RESOURCES:

www.goodbug.com www.greenmethods.com
www.insectary.com www.ipmlabs.com
www.biolineagrosciences.com

ATTENTION! SPRING 2017 SOLD-OUT LIST

SOLD-OUT STRAWBERRIES

Albion, Annapolis and Brunswick.

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST! STRAWBERRIES

Rutgers Scarlet, Sonata, Clancy, Flavorfest, Yambu and Monterey (day-neutral)

SOLD-OUT RASPBERRIES

Himbo Top, Mac Black® and Nova

AVAILABLE ONLY FOR LATE SHIPPING RASPBERRIES

Jewel Black

SOLD-OUT BLACKBERRIES

Ouachita and Prime-Ark® Freedom

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST! BLACKBERRIES

Natchez

SOLD-OUT ASPARAGUS

Millennium

SOLD-OUT RHUBARB Commercial quantities

CORRECTION!

In our previous Newsletter (Fall 2016) there were typographical errors regarding pricing and royalties for our newest red raspberry varieties in the Commercial Growers Price List on page 9. They were marked with * as patented varieties, but licensing for these is more complicated than for other varieties. Royalty fees are not included in the price of these plants. We apologize for the error and any confusion this may have caused.

When purchasing Advanced Berry Breeding's cultivars, Kweli, Kwanza and Imara:

- All growers must complete and sign a Fruit Producers License.
- Annual royalty payments will be collected on the linear meters of row under production.
- Trial quantities (less than 1000 plants) can be planted without an Annual License Fee and Annual Royalty payments, but carry a plant royalty of \$1.00 per plant.

SUMMER 2017

Tours, Seminars & Field Days

AUGUST

August 15th & 16th, 2017, North American Strawberry Growers Association (NASGA), Summer Tour
Minneapolis, Minnesota



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BERRY IMPORTANT INFORMATION ENCLOSED!

 Stay connected. Follow us on Facebook.

Keep up to date on the happenings at our farm and get informed! We offer tips and reminders throughout the year and we will let you know when we have a new article or video available. You could participate in discussions with other growers. Feel free to ask questions or make suggestions. We look forward to sharing with you!



FOR SALE
Canadian Wood Quarts 500 per case. Starting at \$110.00/case plus shipping

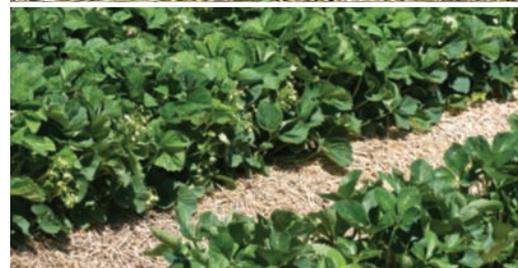
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IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING MULCH REMOVAL!

Growers in the mid-west and other regions have recently experienced a prolonged warm period with temperatures well into the 60's and 70's.

- Start checking under the straw for plant growth after several days of warm weather.
- To delay extensive frost protection, hold mulch on as long as possible.
- This process is important in order not to experience difficulties.
- The heaviest clumps of straw hold the most moisture and growth will start there first. It is important to avoid yellowed leaves on new growth.
- New growth that shows yellowing, indicates trouble; the straw should be removed immediately.
- Once straw is removed, set up irrigation for frost protection.
- This frost protection method will work in most situations; continuing to water until all the ice has melted.
- Row covers will protect for a few degrees depending on the relative humidity. Double covers will give the most protection.

Feel free to contact us if you wish to discuss your specific situation.



QUESTIONS? FEEL FREE TO E-MAIL US:
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