

A Lesson in Strawberry History



Strawberries are indigenous to both the northern and southern hemispheres. They have been found growing by the seaside, in the woods, and on mountain tops. The strawberry was first described in literature as early as 1000AD and the first sketch of a strawberry plant was printed in 1484. The first mention of **strawberries** occurred sometime between 234-149 BC in the writings of Cato, a Roman Senator. The first descriptions published were mostly for the medicinal uses of the plant and not for the benefits of the fruit. For a period of time in the 12th Century Saint Hildegard Von Binger, then an abbess, pronounced that **strawberries** were unfit to eat due to the fact that they grew close to the ground; it was thought that the fruit was contaminated by the snakes and toads that may have touched them. This, along with the support of her theory by local political figures, caused many people to avoid the fruit and decreased its growing popularity. Charles Linnaeus, however, put this superstition to rest by prescribing for himself a diet of only the fruit.

Strawberries began to be sold at a London marketplace around 1831. They were most likely harvested from nearby fields or woodlands and not from "commercial" production areas. In England and mainland Europe as the consumption of **strawberries** became more popular, many commoners as well as aristocrats would have a patch in their home gardens. France, though, became the the front runner in **strawberry** production.

The word **Strawberry** is in itself, peculiar to the English language. The name has a variety of possible origins. Straw was commonly used to mulch the plants during the winter and as weed and soil control to keep the berries cleaner. In London children used to collect the berries, string them on pieces of straw, then sell them at the markets as "Straws of Berries". The runners which the plants produce are said to be strewn or dispersed around the plant. In some literature the fruit is called strewberry. In Latin the fruit is referred to as "Fragra" or Fragrant. Charles Linnaeus gave **strawberry** the species name of *Fragaria*. In French, Italian, and Spanish the fruit is referred to as a "Fraise" or fragrant berry. The Narragansett Indians of North America called the fruit "wuttahimneash" or "heart berry".

The explorer Cartier brought **strawberries** back to France from his first trip to the Quebec Province of Canada in 1534 while another explorer, Harriot, brought plant specimens with him from Virginia to London. Other **strawberry** plants were brought to Europe from Chile and Peru where they had been cultivated and marketed long before the Spanish arrived. The **strawberry** plants found native in North America, were superior to all European varieties in size, flavor, and beauty. Only in 1697 were the first detailed accounts of **strawberry** production for larger fruit, including correct soil conditions, pest problems etc. written by the gardener at Versailles. In the 18th Century one of the first breeding crosses was made to improve the **strawberry**. A Virginia variety with good flavor and fruitfulness was crossed with a Chilean variety which lent the resultant offspring both size and firmness. This variety became known as the Pineapple or Pine **strawberry** due to its distinctive flavor.



"Hudson" was the first **strawberry** hybrid developed in the USA in 1780. And in 1843 Cincinnati Ohio growers were the first to ship **strawberries** using refrigeration, in the form of ice placed on top of the boxes. This development led to increase marketing areas and yet more increase in popularity.



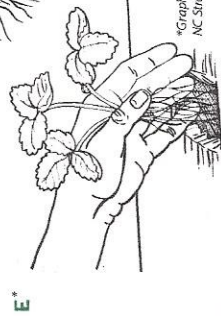
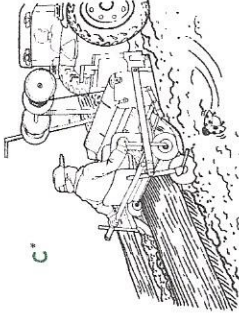
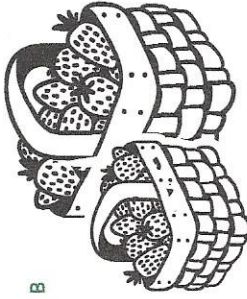
BERRY FUN WORD SEARCH

WORD BANK															
SEED	STRAWBERRY	JAM	PICK	RAISED BED	FARMER										
ROOTS	SPRING	PLANT	PLASTIC	JUICY	STEM										
SOIL	FRESH	LOCAL	DRIP TAPE	DELICIOUS	FLOWER										
SWEET	HONEYBEE	POLLEN													
O	S	P	R	I	N	G	H	P	L	A	S	T	I	C	
S	S	T	R	A	W	B	E	R	R	Y	Z	T	F	T	
B	S	N	T	A	Q	O	L	W	P	G	N	I	A	J	
W	O	X	R	M	I	K	I	L	O	A	T	X	M	R	
X	V	P	S	T	S	D	E	P	Q	I	Q	F	T	E	D
R	B	D	I	V	G	H	E	P	Q	S	E	H	R	D	
C	M	R	A	C	F	O	L	D	S	E	O	A	T	X	
J	T	I	D	V	K	N	I	T	B	E	O	A	T	X	
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R	H	T	T	Y	D	Y	I	S	L	H	D	D	L	B	
E	G	A	E	Z	N	B	O	R	O	G	V	S	D		
S	U	P	O	M	Y	E	U	N	C	J	W	T	I	R	
H	Y	E	O	I	H	E	S	J	A	M	O	E	U	W	
Y	U	V	P	U	R	O	Z	M	L	O	E	O	U		
K	G	U	P	O	L	L	E	N	R	J	U	I	C	Y	

8 HOW DO STRAWBERRIES GROW?

DIRECTIONS:

In the activity below match the descriptions with the correct drawing.



A farmer prepares his/her soil in late summer for planting. A machine pulled behind a tractor will mound dirt into a raised bed. Plastic is also put down over the dirt to protect the area of soil in which strawberries will be planted.

When strawberry plants begin to bloom, honey bees will visit the flowers for pollen and nectar. Pollinated plants will start growing berries. The very center of the flower turns into the strawberry.

It takes about 28 days for the sweet berries to ripen. They are picked and placed in containers by hand. Make sure you wash them before eating!

Underneath the strawberry plant and plastic, a farmer will put down irrigation tape. Water will drip down through the tape to the plant's mouth - its roots!

Small strawberry plants are each planted by hand. A farmer may plant 12,000 to 15,000 plants per acre. Remember: An acre is about the same size as one football or soccer field!



7 SUM MATH!

Can you SUM—mize the best way to know if a strawberry is ripe by decoding the phrase below? Use the key to determine the letter for each blank space. Your math skills will make the difference!

- 13+7 11-3 15-10 24-6 12-7 9-5 3+1 18-13 9+9
- 10+10 9-1 2+3 26-24 23-18 12+8 26-6 19-14 10+8

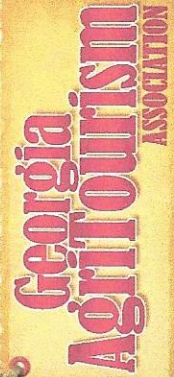
KEY

A=1, B=2, C=3, D=4, E=5, F=6, G=7, H=8, I=9, J=10, K=11, L=12, M=13, N=14, O=15, P=16, Q=17, R=18, S=19, T=20, U=21, V=22, W=23, X=24, Y=25, Z=26



9 DO YOU KNOW?

The dots on the outside of a strawberry are seeds. How many do you think are on each berry?



ANSWER BANK

STRAWBERRIES BY SEASON
Activity #5: fall, winter, spring, summer

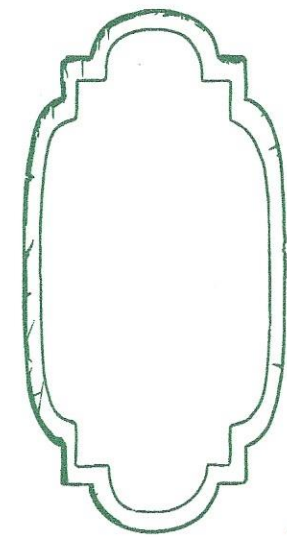
2

S

IS FOR STRAWBERRY

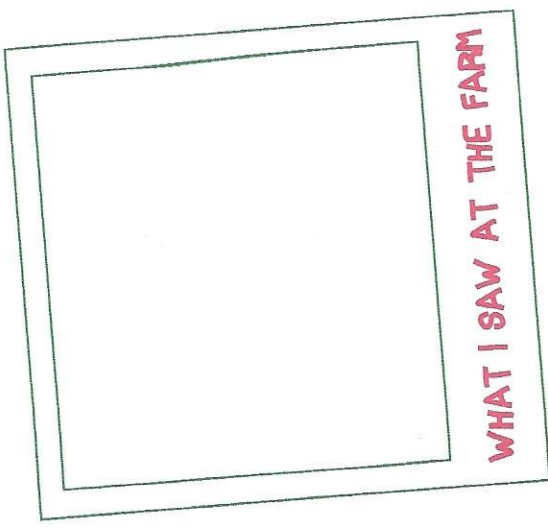
Can you name 3 things we can make using strawberries?

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____



MY VISIT TO THE FARM...

In the space below, draw a picture of an item or scene you saw on the farm:



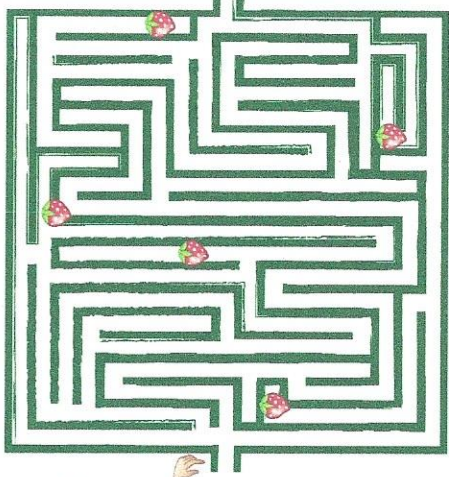
WHAT I SAW AT THE FARM

What is one fact you learned? Be sure to write your answer in complete sentence(s) below:



4 A-MAZE-ING BERRIES






Help the picker find his way through the berry patch to get to his baskets.



3

DIRECTIONS:



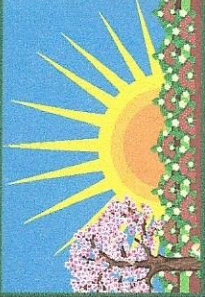

Describe a STRAWBERRY using your five senses.

SIGHT 	
SMELL 	
HEARING 	
TASTE 	
TOUCH 	

5

STRAWBERRIES BY SEASON

Below are four pictures of strawberries growing by the season. Can you label each season correctly?

1 Farmers plant strawberries in the _____		2 During the _____ months, the berries are covered with a big blanket to protect them from ice and snow.	
3 In the _____, strawberries bloom, ripen, and are picked.		4 We enjoy fresh berries during the _____, while farmers prepare their fields for another season.	

ANSWER BANK

DO YOU KNOW? HOW DO STRAWBERRIES GROW?

Around 200 C, A, B, D, E

SUM MATH

20,8,5; 18, 5,4,4,5,18; 20,8,5; 2,5,20,20,5,18

Translation: The Redder the Better

Ss



strawberry

