



## Newsletter - April 2004

## Growing Organic Strawberry

### From the Editor

With its lovely colour, sweet smell and pleasant taste, strawberry is a very popular fruit, which can be enjoyed in many ways. Apart from being served as fresh fruit, it is a common ingredient found in cakes and pastries, milk shake, jam etc. If organically cultivated in a greenhouse, it will have a higher economic value.

### Nursery and Planting

- Strawberry likes cool and dry weather. The optimum temperature, relative humidity and light intensity for its growth are 15~25 °C, 65~70 % and 18,000~20,000 Lux respectively.
- Choose strong seedlings to plant in the field. Each seedling should have more than 5 green leaves, a rhizome thicker than 1 cm and a gross weight of 25~30 g.
- Strawberry is a plant with shallow roots. It can be planted in tiers to fully utilize the greenhouse space for higher yield. Row spacing should be about 20 cm × 25 cm.



### Application of Fertilizer and Irrigation

- Apply compost and organic fertilizer as basal fertilizers.
- After the seedlings resume growing, use drip tubes to apply diluted liquid organic fertilizer once a week.
- When the seedlings are growing steadily, apply bone meal as top dressing.
- When the plants are growing luxuriantly, apply bone meal and organic fertilizer as top dressing.
- It is convenient and labour-saving to use a drip irrigation system.



### Other Cultivation Management

- Easy cultivation management: Adequate light, fertilizer and water are required. Old and sick leaves as well as weak fruits should be removed to facilitate growth. The yield will be increased significantly if pollination bees are introduced to assist in the pollination process.

### Harvesting

- Fruits are produced about 45~50 days after planting. Pick strawberries which are 70~80 % into full colour.



Note: As the new rhizome of strawberry will arch and flowers will come out on the arching side, it should be noted when planting seedlings that all these arches are arranged to face outwards for easy harvesting.

**Coming Next**  
**Growing Organic**  
**Golden Cap Mushroom**

For more information and visits to greenhouses, please contact:  
Corps Development Section, AFCD  
(Tel: 2668 0295)  
AFCD Home Page <http://www.afcd.gov.hk>