
Comments on some newer strawberry varieties

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Originally posted on OMAFRA website in September, 2015 by Elizabeth Harlow, USEL student, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

A strawberry variety trial was planted in 2014 at the Simcoe Research Station in southern Ontario. The following information was based on observations from this trial in 2015, conversations with growers and trial results from other berry producing regions in northeastern America.

A severe frost on May 22 impacted the early yields of the trial.

Donna

This late-season strawberry originated from New Zealand in 1993, but it is new to Ontario. The fruit is medium-large, full red straight through and heart-shaped with a small calyx. The flavour is tart, juicy and not very sweet. Some of the berries might have an irregular shape. Its flesh and skin are both soft and bruise easily. Donna is sensitive to foliar diseases, and it produces relatively low yields.



Figure 1. Donna strawberries (Photo Credit: Elizabeth Harlow).

Laurel

This mid-season strawberry originated from a cross between Allstar and Cavendish made in Kentville, Nova Scotia in 2012. Laurel is an improvement on Cavendish; it is firmer, more uniform and more resistant to diseases. The berry is medium-large, bright red and very high quality. The flavour is good, and it is an attractive, aromatic berry that ships well. Laurel is tolerant of leaf diseases and red stele, but susceptible to botrytis. It might not be fully winter hardy for northern Ontario, and it produces average yields. It is a good variety for fresh markets and pick-your-own.



Figure 2. Laurel strawberries (Photo Credit: Pam Fisher).

Lila

This mid-season strawberry originated from a cross between Queen Elisa and Wendy made in Kentville, Nova Scotia in 2012. It produces medium-small, shiny, orange-red and round conic berries with a slightly uneven surface and a grainy texture. The flavour is sweet and juicy but somewhat tart. The plant is semi-upright with an open growth habit that makes it easy to pick. It is winter hardy. Recommended for fresh markets or pick-your-own.



Figure 3. Lila strawberries (Photo Credit: Elizabeth Harlow.

Berries from the 4th pick. Earlier fruit had better size and shape).

Rubicon

This mid-season strawberry originated from New Haven, Connecticut. The berries are moderately firm with excellent flavour and aroma. It has dark green foliage with a bluish tinge. Rubicon is resistant to red stele and black root rot, but plants are susceptible to anthracnose. It tolerates frost well, and produces good yields.

Malwina

This strawberry originated from Germany. They are a very late-season variety, maturing after Valley Sunset. The berries are large and of good quality. They maintain their size through their season. It has good flavour. It is very

vigorous; nitrogen needs to be managed to avoid excessive vegetative growth. Malwina is tolerant of verticillium and red stele, but susceptible to leaf blight.



Figure 4. Malwina strawberries (Photo Credit: Pam Fisher.

Malwina berries still unripe on July 8th, while Valley Sunset is being harvested).

Mayflower

This mid-late season strawberry originated from East Malling, United Kingdom. The berries are small but high-quality and have good flavour. Mayflower tolerates wet weather well, and is high-yielding. This variety was not outstanding in our trial.

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