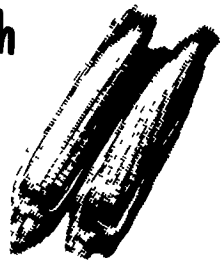




Seeding,  
Weeding  
and mulch  
more



For the avid gardener

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — Asparagus and strawberries are popular with home gardeners. After-the-harvest care of these perennial spring crops is vital to next year's production.

Mature asparagus beds (5 years or older) can be harvested for six weeks and then the foliage (brush) is allowed to develop. Healthy brush is essential to continue vigor of the planting so disease and insect control is important through the summer. Asparagus beetle larvae (small greenish "worms") devour foliage; rust, a fungus disease, damages it. Both can be controlled with spray treatments recommended by the Extension Service.

Weed control, though difficult, is very important, also. There are no pre-emergence herbicides labeled for use in asparagus; summer mulching may help control annual weeds. The best tactic for troublesome perennial weeds is to treat the bed with the herbicide

glyphosate in early spring at least a week before spears begin to emerge. Soil pH should be maintained at 6.5 - 6.8; apply limestone according to soil test results.

If June-harvested strawberry beds are to be continued for another year they require renovation. In the matted row system recommended by Rutgers for home gardens, row width is reduced after harvest (by digging, tilling) and the oldest plants removed from the row. Then the area between rows is cultivated during the summer to encourage runner growth and renewal of the matted row. An alternative to narrowing the rows is to thin the plants in the row, removing old and crowded plants. Fertilizer should be applied in July and mid-August (2 pound of 5-10-10 per 100 square foot).

Control insects and weeds if necessary. Hand removal is the only choice for established weeds. pre-emergence herbicides are

NORRISTOWN — It's strawberry time in Pennsylvania. In most parts of the state, the strawberry harvest starts in late May or early June and lasts about four or five weeks. Strawberries are also one of the most popular of the "pick-your-own" crops in the state according to extension agent Paul Reber.

If you have picked your own strawberries in the past, you may get a call from the farmer telling you when the berries are ripe. If this will be your first "pick-your-own" season, here are a few hints to make the experience more enjoyable.

Start by locating a "pick-your-own" patch. Most farmers selling berries will place ads in newspapers or on the radio for a few days before they expect the strawberries to ripen. Or, you can

useful in weed-free plantings when used according to label instructions.

For more information on both these crops, contact the Extension Service (201) 788-1338.

All Cooperative Extension Service programs are offered without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or handicap.

## It's strawberry time!

stop at a farm market and ask about "pick-your-own" fields.

After you find a place, call ahead to find out when the berries will be ready for picking. Ask also about directions to the farm, days and hours for picking, what the price is, if you take checks, and whether you have to supply your own containers. If you have young children, ask if they're allowed in the patch with you.

Some growers provide restroom facilities, drinking water, and a picnic area... others don't. It's best to find out first.

If you aren't wearing the right clothes, you won't have a very

good time. Slacks are better than shorts, and some type of padding for the knees will cut out a lot of aches and pains. Long sleeved shirts and broad brimmed hats will give you protection from the sun. And an insect repellent may discourage some of those "non-paying" visitors to the field who are more interested in you than the strawberries.

Many people who "pick-their-own" say they do it because they get top quality at lower prices.. they like being outside visiting with others.. and it's just plain fun. If you give it a try, you may find that you, too, will enjoy it.

## Franklin 4-H Shepherds

The Franklin County 4-H Shepherds recently met at the county extension office.

Zoe Wildeson was selected as a Keystone winner in the bicycle category for a project she had completed as a member of the Shepherds. She was interviewed at Penn State to be considered as a participant for National 4-H Congress in Chicago and is one of

the top two or three 4-H members based on her 4-H records.

The Shepherds will be going to Hershey Park on June 12 and will be having a fitting and showing clinic at the Keener home followed by a picnic on June 19.

The topic of the meeting was the digestive system of sheep, feeding sheep, and poisonous plants of Pennsylvania, presented by Elisabeth Keener.



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