Fifer Orchards strawberry production timeline

We by creating raised beds in the soil. The tractor pulls an implement that mounds the soil and lays down plastic and irrigation drip tape. The plastic layer helps to control weeds, provide proper moisture and allow the soil to warm up faster in the spring.

This is what the beds look like when complete.

Next, we plant the small strawberry plants in late August.

The plants are in small containers and are called "plugs"

The tractor moves very slow as the planters gently place the plugs in to the holes in the plastic.

Our strawberry patch is now fully planted and we can turn on the irrigation when needed to supply water directly to the roots. This method of irrigation helps conserve water usage and reduce disease pressure on the leaves. The plants enjoy the late summer and fall sunshine and begin growing.

Once winter comes, we cover the strawberries with fibrous blankets that keep them from freezing during December-March. In April, we uncover the strawberries and let them continue growing and blooming.

Here are the plants in April uncovered and enjoying the spring warmth. You can see blossoms forming.

Strawberry blossoms are white with a yellow center. This yellow part of the blossom becomes the strawberry.

Honey bees and bumblebees are used during bloom to pollinate the strawberries.

Here you can see the stages. White blossom, to green berry, to red berry.

When ripe, strawberries are picked in to green quarts and then placed in white flats for easy transport.

Strawberries are very delicious and nutritious. Did you know?

-8 medium sized strawberries have more vitamin C than an orange
-Strawberries are high in fiber, antioxidants, vitamin C, potassium and folate
-All 50 states produce strawberries.
-Strawberries are a member of the rose family along with apples and plums.
-On average there are 200 tiny seeds in each strawberry.

You can pick your own strawberries straight from the patch at Fifers in April and May!