Issue 6 – July 23, 2025

Fruit Crop Report

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Provincial Overview

Strawberry harvest has wrapped up with average yields overall. Saskatoon and Sour Cherry harvesting ended in many orchards this week, while raspberry harvesting continues. Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) population numbers have not peaked yet, allowing for higher marketable yields on raspberries so far.
Timely rains have occurred for many berry fields and orchards in southern Manitoba, but drought conditions exist in the Interlake, requiring more frequent irrigation, especially on strawberries.

Commercial Fruit Crops - Timely Topics

Save the Date: Horticulture School July 31, 2025
Assiniboine College, North Hill Campus, 9:30am-3pm

We hope to see you at the 2025 Horticulture School. More details at: Province of Manitoba | agriculture - Horticulture School

Sessions at the 2025 Horticulture School include:

- High Tunnel Design/Operation
- Iron Chlorosis in Strawberries and Fruit & Vegetable Fertility Challenges in Alkaline Soils
- Vegetable Production on Raised Beds with Mulch
- Monitoring for Invasive Insects
- Horticulture Pathology

Pre-registration is required. You can register via email at Tom.Gonsalves@gov.mb.ca.The cost is $40 and includes lunch and refreshments. Registration can be paid by cash at the event or by cheque (payable to PFGA).

Directions to the location for the 2025 Horticulture School can be found on Google Maps at the following link: https://goo.gl/maps/tjmsKSVkFGLUAtcR9?g_st=am

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Tom.Gonsalves@gov.mb.ca

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Strawberry Renovations in Established Fields

Figure 1: Strawberry field 2-3 weeks after renovation.

Renovation is the management process of regenerating a strawberry planting of June-bearing strawberries, after harvest, to keep the planting for an additional crop year. The cost of renovation is much less than establishing a new planting. Some growers keep a field in production for three, four or even more years. Renovation is most successful if the plants are vigorous. Renovation is not used on plantings in the establishment year, or on day neutrals.

Once the last picking is over, fields of June bearers should be renovated immediately to attain maximum regrowth over summer and into the short fall season. Strawberry plants tend to enter a stage of low activity toward the end of harvest. One advantage of mowing is the development of a younger, more efficient leaf canopy. This rejuvenated canopy is more effective for "recharging" the plant energy systems of fruit formation, and the over wintering food reserve buildup. Mowing also offers disease and insect control benefits, especially if the old leaves are removed from the row (see Figure 1).

Suggested June-Bearing Strawberry Renovation Steps

Step 1. After the last picking, apply nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium based on soil test recommendations.

Step 2. Mow the tops of the plants to remove old leaves without cutting the new expanding growth. This usually occurs at a height of 2.5 to 5 cm (1 to 2 in.) above the crowns. Some hand weeding or herbicide spot treatment can occur at this time as well. If a post-emergent herbicide such as Lontrel is used, if weeds are spot sprayed or a grassy herbicide is applied, then delay mowing 7-10 days.

Step 3. Narrow the rows to 2 feet using a rotovator or between row cultivator on either side of the row. Do not mow off plant after first week of August, as plants may not have time to regenerate sufficiently and prepare for winter.

Step 4. Apply recommended pre-emergent herbicides, after renovation mowing and rotovating for weed seedling control, into August and early September. Use recommended herbicide rates and avoid spraying in the heat of the day, as herbicides can slow down the regeneration of the strawberry plant. Wait 10-14 days after applying Lontrel or Venture L and 5-7 days after applying Agri-mek miticide before applying Sinbar.

Step 5. Irrigate thoroughly and repeat as necessary to maintain sufficient moisture for vigorous growth. The strawberry plant is developing fruit buds in the crown for next year's harvest, so attention to soil moisture levels throughout August is important.

Province of Manitoba- Strawberry Renovation

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Registered Herbicide Options for Strawberries at Renovation

For post-emergent weeds, Lontrel is effective on broadleaf weeds, especially on Canada Thistle, while Venture L or Poast Ultra are effective on grassy weeds. Once plants are mowed and rows are narrowed by rotovating/tillage, an application of Sinbar or Devrinol can also be considered. See labels for specific rates and directions listed for strawberries.

Pesticide Label Search - Health Canada

Pesticide Labels - Apps on Google Play

Pesticide Labels on the Apple App Store

Strawberry Insect Pest Scouting After Renovations

After renovations are complete, mites (two-spotted spider mite or cyclamen mite) may become an issue, and potentially hinder plant regeneration after mowing. The heat and humidity of July and early August can be favourable for rapid development of mites. Spider mite damage can cause wrinkling of smaller leaves, and they will leave small webbing/eggs on the underside of leaves. Spider mites are about 0.5 mm in length and can be seen with the naked eye or hand lens.

In the last few years there has been a higher suspected incidence of Cyclamen mites in Manitoba strawberry fields, and they have been seen this summer. Adult mites are less than 0.3 mm long and require a hand lens or observational microscope to spot. Cyclamen mite symptoms are crinkled, distorted and stunted leaf growth with short petioles (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Cyclamen mite strawberry leaf damage.

Cultural Control Strategies

To reduce mite problems on strawberries, irrigate regularly to avoid water stress, and eliminate weeds that can act as alternate hosts in and near strawberry plantings. Cultivating between rows, and in the headlands, in the fall, will also disturb plant litter at over-wintering sites, used by the mites.

Chemical Controls

Agri-mek and Magister (miticide/ insecticide) are registered for use on various mites on strawberries. Maximum 2 applications per season for Agri-mek and 1 application per season for Magister. Do not apply Magister during bloom as very toxic to pollinators.

Province of Manitoba | agriculture - Mites

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