

2005-2006 Strawberry High Tunnel Observation

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METHODS:

Strawberry tips were obtained from Strawberry Hill Inc., and were planted in 50 cell trays containing Metro Mix 360 soilless media. Trays were placed outside for four weeks on weed mat under mini wobblers and misters during the month of August. Planting media was kept continually moist to promote root development. The resulting plugs were transplanted to the high tunnel by hand. All nutrients were supplied through the trickle irrigation. Strawberry plants were set in double rows with 12 inches between plants and rows and planted on 9/14/2005. Then .5 ounce row cover was placed over the strawberry plants on December 6th. The side's of the tunnel were opened and closed as needed for ventilation. The plant growth was monitored throughout the winter.

RESULTS:

This high tunnel plasticulture strawberry observation is to look at extending the harvest and marketing season for strawberry farmers. Strawberries planted in the high tunnel tended to mature and ripen ahead of berries planted in the field. Harvest of the berries began on April 18th about three weeks earlier than the field harvest. The high tunnel had four raised beds covered with black plastic mulch. 75 plants per row with 300 plants total in the high tunnel.

High Tunnel (HT) Strawberries vs Field Run (FR)

	lb/plant		lb/acre		avg. wt.	
	HT	FR	HT	FR	HT	FR
Average	0.56	1.20	9671	20877	0.44	0.60