

Issue 8 – August 5, 2026

Fruit Crop Report



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Provincial Overview

Strawberry fields are either being renovated or activities are complete. Raspberry harvest continues, with average yields in fields undergoing weekly control of spotted winged drosophila (SWD). There are some reports of suspected cyclamen mite or spider mite leaf damage on new strawberry plantings. In established strawberry fields it is important to monitor for mite damage on new growth after renovation mowing. Wild harvesting of chokecherries has begun south of the Trans-Canada highway.

Commercial Fruit Crops - Timely Topics

Strawberry Renovations in Established Fields



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

Renovation is the process of rejuvenating a June-bearing strawberry planting after harvest to maintain productivity for another growing season. 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, June bearing fields 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 for fruit formation and over wintering food reserves 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 applying a post-emergent herbicide such as Lontrel or spot spraying weeds 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.

Report compiled by Anthony Mintenko
Fruit Crop Specialist, Manitoba Agriculture
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Do not mow off plants after the 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.

Registered Herbicide Options for Strawberries at Renovation

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

[Pesticide Label Search - Health Canada](#)

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Scouting for Strawberry Insect Pests 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 these pests. Spider mites damage leaves, causing wrinkling and smaller leaves. Spider mites will leave small webbing/eggs on the underside of the leaf. Spider mites are about 0.5 mm in length and can be seen with the naked eye or hand lens.



Figure 2: Cyclamen mite strawberry leaf damage.

In the last few years, there has been a higher suspected incidence of Cyclamen mites in strawberry fields in Manitoba. 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).

Cultural Control Strategies

To reduce mite problems on strawberries: irrigate regularly to avoid water stress, eliminate weeds that can act as alternate hosts in and near strawberry plantings and cultivate between rows and headlands in the fall to disturb plant litter (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 it is very toxic to pollinators.

Sour Cherry Bacterial Canker Disease

There has been a report of possible bacterial canker (*Pseudomonas syringae*) on a home garden planted sour cherry. Bacterial canker development is favoured by humid, wet weather. It has rarely occurred on any sour cherry cultivar released by the University of Saskatchewan's Fruit Crops Program (i.e. Romance series) planted in Manitoba or Saskatchewan.

Symptoms



Figure 3: Wilted sour cherry leaves above canker.

Symptoms include dieback of leaves/ branches above a dark (Figure 3), sunken canker on infected trunks and/or branches. A brown discolouration is found under the bark on the edges of a new canker. The infected tissue may also form very characteristic dark orange gumming sap (Figures 4, 5).

Infection can spread via rain, wind, insects or pruning tools, and can spread to the entire shrub. Infection can occur when plants were impacted by winter injury, frost cracking or hail damage. Avoid overhead watering and control weeds around the plant as they may be a source of bacteria.



Figure 4: Sour cherry gummy sap from canker infection.

Control



Figure 5: Sour cherry gummy sap from canker infection.

Prune out infected branches when plants are dry, at least 12 inches below the canker. Disinfect pruning tools after every cut with hand sanitizer, isopropyl alcohol (70% solution) or 10% bleach solution (9 parts water, 1 part bleach). If the main trunk of the cherry is infected with a canker, or if after pruning more infected branches develop, then the entire tree may need to be removed. Pruned branches should be burned, buried or disposed of off-site.

References

Dwarf Sour Cherries: A guide for Commercial Production. Bob Bors and Linda Matthews, University Extension Press, University of Saskatchewan, 2004.