Day Neutral Strawberry Production

- Production in the year of Planting
- Late Summer/Fall Production extends season
- Production is over a longer time period
- Plasticulture eliminates a lot of the problems with Day neutral production

Advantages of using Plastic

- Control Soil Temperature - extend season
- Weed Control
- Moisture Control
- Fruit Quality
- Fruit Cleanliness
- Ease of Picking
- Other Advantages

Cultural Practices Day Neutral vs June Bearer

- June Bearers need to overwinter
- Summer/Fall Planted Plugs
- Bare Root Plants
- Day Neutrals
  - Annual Cropped
  - Spring Planted Bare Roots

Physiology of Day Neutral vs June Bearing Strawberry

- June Bearer is a short day plant
- sets flower buds when <13.5 hours of sunlight and temps <10 C
- Day Neutral is thought to be a long day plant
- Flower initiation is still influenced by day length and temperature
- Strong and Weak day neutrals
- Flower initiation is 60 to 100 days before flowering
- Flower initiation seems to depend on the crown size as well
- Each variety is different so we need to think about what we can do to manipulate the cropping cycle
Types of Plastic

- Embossed vs Non embossed
- Clear
- Infrared Transmissible - IRT
- Black
- Skunk
- White/Silver
Plastic Widths

- 4 foot
- 5 foot
- 6 foot
- 7 foot

Planting

- Plant Early
- Plant by hand
- is critical - error on the deep side
- Trim roots if you are having problems getting deep enough
- Keep planting holes as small as possible
- Irrigate beds the day before planting
Drip Irrigation

- Low Water Usage
- Can Be Used on Matted Row Production
- Easy to Get Started
- Throw Away Components

Drip Irrigation Components

- Pump
- Filter
- Fertilizer Injector
- Pressure Regulator
- Drip Tape
Fertigation

- Starter Fertilizer - Probably a Good Idea
- Fertigation Advantages
  - Feed the plants when they need it
  - Able to address deficiencies as they occur

Foliar Feeding

- Leaves are not designed to absorb nutrients
- Works better for some nutrients than others
- Stress situations
- Be sure and leave a check strip
- Compost tea and biologicals
- Growth Regulators
- Improving all the time

Flower Removal

- First flower buds are formed in nursery
- Generally take off the first flower truss or two
- Large crown plants may only take off half of the first trusses
- This will affect how early your plants produce the main crop
- Experiment and keep track

Monitoring Plant Health

- Tissue or Sap Testing
  - Pros and Cons to each
  - Important to monitor plant health
  - Develop a system that works for you

Growth Regulator

- Apogee is registered for use on Strawberry
- Plants are more compact
- Up to 50% more root mass
- Apply when 2-3 trifoliate leaves
- Label rate is a starting point
- Observe PHI

Runner Removal

- Increase yield
- Reduce foliage so you get less disease
- Easier Picking
- Remove runners once secondary plantlets form
- Cut with grape pruners or scissors
**Pesticide Application**
- You will need to control weeds between rows and in plant holes
  - Hand pick
  - Hooded Sprayer
  - Cultivation
  - Flamer
- Scout your fields for pests so you can plan your applications
- SWD can be a problem - keep fields clean
- Use products with short PHI

**Low Tunnels**
- Wide tunnels - Dr Kim Lewers USDA Beltsville MD
  - Kits available from Dubois Agri-innovation
  - Low perforated tunnels

**Row Covers**
- Capture and hold heat
- Spring growth acceleration
- Fall Frost Protection and Season Extension
  - This is a must for good Day Neutral Yields
  - Generally pick until Thanksgiving
  - Over Winter Protection
Overwintering

- Day Neutrals are hard to overwinter
- Strong plants overwinter best
- Generally growers over winter and pick only the early spring crop
- With Apogee I have had good picking for a whole second season
- My approach

Media Production

- Grown in High Tunnel
- Grown in Pots using Peat
- Pots are on a 30 inch high Table
- Each Pot has its Own Dripper
- Fertilized Each Time We Water
- Issues - Two Spotted Spider Mites, Powdery Mildew
Some Tips

- Plant Early
- Grow a Strong Plant
- Consider Apogee
- Remove Flowers
- Remove Runners
- Control Weeds Between Rows
- Use Row Covers
- Develop a Market - people are not used to fall berries
- Enjoy an Extended Season!!