

Strawberry Variety Trial

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Introduction

Several new strawberry varieties have been released in the last several years by the USDA and other breeding programs. The purpose of this multiyear study was to compare the performance of these newer varieties against the current widely used varieties in Iowa under soil and environmental conditions existing at the Northeast Research and Demonstration Farm.

Materials and Methods

The strawberry trial consists of eight June bearing varieties, including the newer varieties Primetime, Northeastern, Winona, and Mesabi. The trial was planted in May of 2002. Standard cultural practices were used, including mulching for winter protection.

Results and Discussion

For the second year in a row Mesabi, a newer variety, had the highest yield. It also had the fourth largest berry size. Kent and Jewel had similar high yields, with Jewel having the largest berry size. Both yields and berry weight were down considerably in 2004 from 2003 with a definite reduction in quality king berries. This was attributed to a freeze event on the morning of May 3 when temperatures were recorded at 27°F. There was no frost at all in late April through May 2003. In general, the earlier varieties, especially Kent, were the least effected by the frost. Based on the trial for this year, the three varieties that performed best in both yield and berry size were Mesabi, Kent, and Jewel.

Acknowledgments

Strawberry plants were graciously provided by Indiana Berry & Plant Company, Huntingburg, IN, <http://www.inberry.com/>.

Table 1. Strawberry variety yield and berry weight for 2004 and 2003.

<u>Variety</u>	<u>2004 yield lb/acre</u>	<u>2003 yield lb/acre</u>	<u>Avg berry wt*. 2004–2003 (gm)</u>
Mesabi	25,500	34,100	11.9 – 17.4
Kent	23,300	27,800	12.5 – 14.6
Honeyoye	17,200	27,700	9.1 – 17.5
Jewel	20,600	26,200	13.4 – 19.0
Glooscap	17,400	19,100	10.8 – 14.9
Primetime	10,600	15,800	12.3 – 17.3
Winona	7,700	9,900	10.9 – 17.1
Northeastern	8,200	8,700	9.8 – 12.7

Means of three replications.

* Average weight from first three harvests.