

Strawberry Variety Trial

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Introduction

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

Materials and Methods

The strawberry trial consists of 10 June bearing varieties, including the new varieties *Primetime*, *Mohawk*, *Winona*, and *Delmarvel*. *Tristar*, a day neutral variety, was substituted for *Allstar*. The trial was planted in late April of 1998. Spacing was 18 in. between plants and 48 in. between rows. Standard cultural practices were used, including mulching for winter protection. On June 9, all varieties were available and a blind taste test was conducted with 16 volunteers.

Results and Discussion

For this second year harvest, *Kent*, an industry standard, had the highest yield and the second largest early berry size. *Primetime* seemed to be the most promising new variety, improving from fifth in yield in 1999 to fourth in 2000. *Mohawk* may have potential as an early berry, unfortunately even the king berry is relatively small in size. *Winona* might be a quality late season berry, but did trail the other varieties in yield. The trial is being managed for a June bearer system. Because of this, *Tristar*, a day-neutral, is no longer having yield data taken.

There seemed to be a nearly inverse relationship between berry size and taste. The largest berries were generally rated lower for taste, with the exception of *Jewel*. Two of the newer varieties, *Delmarvel* and *Mohawk*, rated the highest for taste.

Based on this year's trial, the two varieties that performed best in both yield and taste were *Honeyoye* and *Primetime*.

Acknowledgments

Strawberry plants were graciously provided by Indiana Berry & Plant Co., Huntingburg, IN.

Table 1. Strawberry variety yield and berry weight for 2000.

Variety	Yield lbs./acre	Avg. berry weight (g)*	Harvest Dates
Kent	29,315	21.6	5/26 - 6/22
Cavendish	20,959	25.5	5/30 - 6/22
Honeyoye	20,221	16.7	5/26 - 6/22
Primetime	17,754	19.6	5/26 - 6/19
Jewel	16,203	21.5	5/26 - 6/22
Mohawk	14,705	12.5	5/24 - 6/09
Annapolis	14,137	15.8	5/24 - 6/19
Delmarvel	11,335	15.6	5/26 - 6/19
Winona	10,750	18.3	6/05 - 6/22

Means of three replications.

* Average weight from first three harvests.

Table 2. Strawberry variety taste test for 2000.

Variety	Rating
Delmarvel	6.81
Mohawk	6.75
Honeyoye	6.44
Jewel	6.06
Primetime	5.88
Tristar	5.50
Winona	5.06
Kent	4.94
Cavendish	4.25
Annapolis	2.75

Scale of 1 – 10 with 10 as best tasting. Based on 16 tasters.