



Growing Strawberries



INTRODUCTION

Strawberries are an easy plant to grow with children. They are simple to care for, can produce fruit year after year in a school garden, and are delicious! Each strawberry plant even spreads on its own. The plant sends out runners that root and become new plants so a small strawberry patch can grow into a large patch within a few years. Strawberries are very adaptable. They can be planted in a garden plot, in pots, or even in hanging baskets. They need a lot of sunlight, so pick a spot that receives good direct sun throughout the day. They do not need a lot of space, so a small outdoor area will work.

MATERIALS

Strawberry Seedlings

Soil

Pot (if not planting directly into a garden bed)

Watering Can

DIRECTIONS

Planting in a 12" Pot (with drainage hole in bottom)

1. Prepare the pot with soil
2. Add 1-2 seedlings per pot

Planting in a Garden Bed

1. Have children dig a hole large enough to accommodate the root ball
2. Place the seedling in gently
3. Press the soil down around it.

Strawberry plants need consistent water to thrive. Have children water the plants every couple of days, increasing to daily during hot or dry spells. Encourage children to check the soil before watering. If the soil feels dry an inch below the surface, it is time to water. Your classroom can keep a simple watering and weather log to chart their activity. Watch for flowers first and then fruit! In the first year, most strawberry plants will not produce fruit so you could make this into a lesson on patience! When small white flowers appear, the fruit is on the way. Once pollinated, the flowers will develop into strawberries ready to eat! From the second year, the strawberry plants will begin to produce fruit reliably with much less effort required. Some strawberry plants produce two crops a year, one in late spring and the other in the fall. This could be a good choice for your garden!