

# Everbearing Strawberry Cultivars in Illinois

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'Gem', 'Geneva', 'Ogallala', 'Ozark Beauty' and 'Red Rich' everbearing strawberries were established in a test plot at the Pomology Research Center at Urbana in the spring of 1971. The planting was arranged in randomized blocks with 3 replications of each cultivar in a 4-row bed type planting. Each plot consisted of 32 plants spaced 1 foot apart each way and with 3 feet between the 4-row beds, the equivalent of 32,266 plants per acre in a solid planting. The entire planting was mulched with crushed corn-cobs to a depth of approximately 2 inches and overhead sprinkler irrigation was used as needed throughout the growing season. Blossoms were removed until June 25 and all runners were removed at two-week intervals for the entire season.

Late summer and fall yields, berry size, and number of runners removed

**Table 1. Average yields, berry size, and runner production of everbearing cultivars at the Pomology Research Center, Urbana, Illinois.**

Cultivar	Fruit in lbs. per plot	Berry size, No. per lb.	Runners removed per plant
'Gem'	20.1	78	6
'Ozark Beauty'	16.7	90	3
'Ogallala'	13.6	98	6
'Geneva'	12.2	71	3
'Red Rich'	0	0	25

are summarized in the table below.

'Gem' and 'Ozark Beauty' were the most productive of the cultivars in this planting. The yields of 'Ozark Beauty' were probably reduced somewhat by the presence of leaf variegation which was diagnosed in 20 of the plants of this cultivar soon after planting. All of these plants did eventually recover as the season progressed, or more accurately, the variegation symptoms were masked and vigor differences were not apparent. 'Ogallala' fruit was the smallest in size and the dense foliage combined with the relatively short inflorescence made the picking of this cultivar difficult at this spacing. Even though the productivity of 'Geneva' was relatively low, the high quality and attractiveness of the fruit make this cultivar a desirable one in the home garden planting.

None of these cultivars are considered to be suitable for commercial planting under our conditions. 'Red Rich' can no longer be recommended as an everbearing cultivar since our plants only bore fruit the following spring. 'Ozark Beauty' variegated 100% in these plantings the following spring, thus eliminating this cultivar until variegation free stocks can be found. There appears to be considerable room for improvement in everbearing cultivars for Illinois conditions.

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