

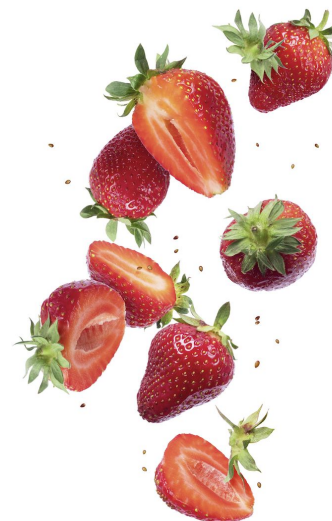
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Growing Strawberries in the Flex Farm

The Flex Farm was designed specifically to grow leafy greens quickly and abundantly. But that doesn't mean you have to limit yourself. Other varieties of plants that thrive in hydroponic environments will also grow in your Flex Farm - such as strawberries!

Experimenting with the Flex Farm is fun and easy to do! Below are best practices for how to grow strawberries successfully in your Flex Farm.



Varieties

Strawberries come as either short-day (June bearing), day neutral or ever-bearing varieties. Day neutral varieties are popular in hydroponic systems but all are viable options.

Nutrients

Fruiting plants do better with a specialized nutrient blend. We recommend [General Hydroponics: FloraNova](#).

It is not recommended to mix fruiting nutrients with water that contains Nutrient A and B provided by Fork Farms as these nutrients are optimized for leafy greens.

Seed, Plug or Root?

Strawberry plants can be grown in the Flex Farm starting with any of these options. They each have their pros and cons.

Seeds: You plant the seeds in the rockwool the same way you would lettuce. However, it might take a long time for the seeds to mature. Most strawberry varieties require one freeze and regrowth before they become fully productive.

Plug: To get more immediate results, roots typically have been through a freeze/thaw cycle and some plugs come from plants that have been through this cycle. You can buy strawberry starts that come rooted in a soil plug that is about the same size as the rockwool cubes. You will need to gently wash off the majority of that soil plug, being careful not to damage the roots. Be careful to leave the crown of the root ball (where the stem and the roots meet) just poking out from the top of your rockwool cube. The crown needs to stay drier than the rest of the root ball.

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Root: You can also purchase a root to grow from. This root will need to be thawed and then cased in a reconstituted rockwool cube. Be cautious, as sometimes these roots can come with insect eggs sacs growing on them. Be sure to remove them during washing before placing them in your Flex Farm.

Getting Your Plant to Flower

General recommendation is to use the correct nutrient and to give your strawberry plants at least 14-hours of light per day.

Producing Fruit

Strawberries are self-pollinating, which means they don't require pollen from a different plant to produce fruit. However, they probably need your help to shake loose their own pollen because they won't have the benefit of bees or wind.

The two best methods for our system are:

- Use a fan to simulate natural wind
- Gently shake/knock on the panels

Insects and Pests

Fruit has a tendency to attract aphids, fruit flies and other pests. Take precautions to limit access by these interlopers into your Farm. A good guide can be found [here](#).

Spacing

Be aware that strawberry plants can grow quite large so space your plants accordingly to reduce overcrowding.