



## CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH 2020 AGRICULTURAL FACT SHEET:



# Strawberries

**Strawberries have long been an important crop in Virginia Beach.**

**History tells us the Jamestown Colonists found wild strawberries in the woods while exploring the area around Cape Henry in 1607.**

**Today, Virginia Beach is the largest strawberry producing county/city in the state of Virginia. The mild oceanic climate and productive soils, along with a large consumer base makes this an ideal location for producing strawberries. The value of the crop ranges from \$750,000 to \$1,000,000 per year.**

The City Seal is comprised of leaping marlins which form its outer edge and represent sport fishing, boating and other water activities. Strawberry leaves create an inner circle representing the importance of agriculture. In the center of the Seal, the Cape Henry Lighthouse and Cross mark the first landing of settlers and the sun and blue water join the beach to indicate the importance of tourism as well as the pleasures of nature available to Virginia Beach residents and visitors.



### Key points of interest:

- In the last 10 years, strawberry acreage ranged from 30 – 40 acres as compared to the early 1900's when acreage would range from 1,200 to 1,600.
- Ideal climate, soil, and research implementation has resulted in higher yields and efficiencies.
- Average production in Virginia Beach is in the 14,000 to 18,000 pounds per acre range.
- **Chandler** strawberries are the most popular variety in Virginia Beach. The high yielding bright red, large, and very tasty berries make this variety hard to beat.
- **Sweet Charlie** is another popular variety that ripens early and has a very sweet flavor.
- **Ruby June** is the distant third, it is starting to get more use, because of the berry's attractive shape, flower and large size.
- The most current study published by North Carolina State University estimated the total cost of producing and harvesting 1 acre of strawberries was estimated at \$18,480.39.
- Insects, disease and weather are three major concerns of strawberry producers.
- Strawberries are planted in Virginia Beach in late September and harvested in May.
- An estimated 20% of the strawberries produced Virginia Beach are sold pre-picked at farmers markets. The remaining berries are harvested by U-Pick customers.
- The average consumption of strawberries has grown to 7.12 lbs. of berries per person in 2018.
- On average, a strawberry farm in Virginia Beach sees an estimated 1,500 visitors to their fields every week for the month of May.



**Visit the Virginia Beach Farmers Market (a major sales location for local strawberries) and local U-pick farms.**

## CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH 2020 AGRICULTURAL FACT SHEET: *STRAWBERRIES*

To assist growers with the numerous challenges of producing strawberry crops, the Virginia Beach Cooperative Extension Office and Department of Agriculture have conducted an annual Virginia Beach Strawberry Field Walk and Strawberry School since 2000, now named the Mid-Atlantic Strawberry Programs, hosting three programs in two days, renamed to show to better represent the audience of growers from a minimum of four states annually. The strawberry programs have been credited with helping growers improve their fertility program, increase yields, and control diseases and insects. This year's Mid-Atlantic Strawberry Programs were held on March 2-3, 2020, with 55 participants in the Strawberry Field Walk and the Strawberry School had 85 attendees. Thanks to the sponsorship from strawberry industry partners, these programs are all offered at no cost to attendees.



**Strawberries are in the same family of the rose flower (Rosaceae) and are really not considered a fruit: the part we eat does not consist of the plant's ovaries (the common definition of fruit).**

### ~ Nutrition ~

**Fortunately for strawberry lovers, one serving of berries offers 96 mg of vitamin C, or 160% of the Daily Value. One cup (144 g) of strawberries contains approximately 55 calories. Strawberries contain high amounts of antioxidants.**



### Virginia Beach Strawberry Producers - U-Pick/Pre-Pick

<p><b>Bay Breeze Farm</b> <i>Pre-pick only</i> 757-721-3288 1076 Sandbridge Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>Cromwell's Produce</b> 757-721-6226 3116 Newbridge Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>Flanagan Farm</b> 757-426-5585 Princess Anne Rd at N. Muddy Creek Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>Henley Farm</b> 757-426-7501 757-426-6869 3513 Charity Neck Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>Virginia Beach Farmers Market</b> 757-385-4388 3640 Dam Neck Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23453</p>
<p><b>Brookdale Farm</b> 757-721-0558 2060 Vaughan Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>Cullipher Farm Market</b> 757-721-7456 1444 Princess Anne Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>The Flip Flop Farmer</b> 757-426-9908 3244 Newbridge Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>Salem Berry Farm</b> 757-818-3156 1763 Salem Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	
<p><b>Cindy's Produce</b> <i>Pre-pick only</i> 757-426-2346 4385 Harpers Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23453</p>	<p><b>Cullipher Berry Patch</b> 757-721-7456 772 Princess Anne Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>Henley's at Pleasant Ridge</b> 757-426-7501 757-426-6869 Princess Anne Rd at Pleasant Ridge Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23456</p>	<p><b>Vaughan Farms' Produce</b> 757-615-4888 1258 Princess Anne Rd Virginia Beach, VA 23457</p>	

