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EC58-1202 The Ogallala Strawberry

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2). Cheyenne 2 is a selection from the F₁ generation of *Fragaria ovalis* A36979 x Fairfax. Cheyenne 3 is a selection from the backcross Fairfax X F₁ (Fairfax x *Fragaria ovalis*). *Fragaria ovalis* is the native wild strawberry of the Rocky Mountain region.

Twenty-two years elapsed between the initiation of the breeding program and well over 100,000 seedlings were grown to produce the new variety.

Ogallala is one of the best if not the best of everbearing strawberries for the northern Great Plains and merits trial in any area where hardiness and drought tolerance is at a premium.



Glenn Viehmeyer, North Platte Experiment Station, shown with Ogallala strawberries.

Ogallala Strawberry

WELL ADAPTED TO:

Iowa

Kansas

Dakotas

Nebraska

Northern Missouri

Western Minnesota

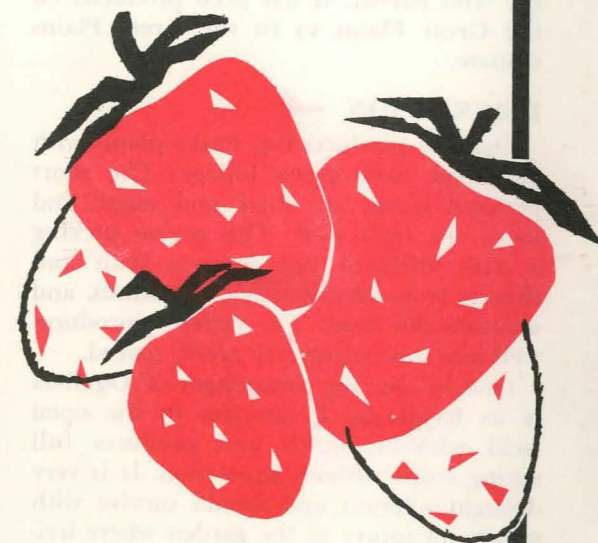
March 1958

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The Ogallala Strawberry

by
Glenn Viehmeyer



EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING
W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR

◆ Ogallala, a new everbearing strawberry, is a joint introduction by the North Platte Experiment Station of the University of Nebraska and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Plants are available through commercial nursery trade.

HISTORY

This new Everbearer is the result of 25 years of breeding and testing by the North Platte Experiment Station and the Cheyenne Horticultural Field Station. It was bred by Dr. LeRoy Powers, geneticist at the Cheyenne Station and selected from a seedling progeny by Glenn Viehmeyer, Horticulturist, at the North Platte Station.

The new variety combines germ plasms of the Rocky Mountain wild strawberry *Fragaria ovalis* with those of the cultivated varieties Fairfax, Midland, and Rockhill. In it is combined the fruit size of the cultivated berry and the hardiness and vigor of the wild parent. It has been produced on the Great Plains to fit the Great Plains climate.

DESCRIPTION

Ogallala produces big, husky plants with abundant dark green foliage. The short petioled leaves are thick and tough and cover the fruit well. This makes picking a little difficult but protects fruit and flowers from bird damage, hot winds, and unseasonable frost. The variety reproduces well and new plants are nicely spaced.

One of the big advantages of Ogallala is its hardiness. It survives in the open field without mulch and produces full spring crops without protection. It is very drought tolerant and should survive with minimum injury in the garden where irrigation water is not available. Its hardiness and drought tolerance allow it to survive and bear where older varieties fail.

Fruit size in Ogallala ranges from medium to large. The spring and fall crops have the greatest size while summer fruit is smaller. With abundant irrigation there

is only a brief rest period following the spring crop.

At the North Platte Experiment Station the first fruits ripen about May 20 and bearing continues for about thirty days. A rest period lasting until mid July occurs but even during this time a few berries are available. Following the rest period bearing is continuous until hard freezes in late fall. On several occasions fruit has been harvested as late as Thanksgiving Day. Fruit protected by the heavy foliage survives 20° temperatures without injury.

Fruit color is a brilliant dark red and this deep color reaches to the center of the berry with no paler core. Seeds are yellow and add to the appearance of the berry.

The flavor is exceptionally good in fresh fruit and in the canned or frozen product. Sugar content is high and the berry is excellent for eating out of hand. At Iowa State College and at the North Platte Station it has rated best of all varieties tested for freezing. Frozen berries hold their shape well and suffer less breakdown than most kinds when thawed. Preserved berries retain shape better than most varieties and the processed fruit has a deep color. The aroma is high and a dish of berries will perfume a room.

Ogallala is not a commercial berry; its tender skin makes it a berry for the home garden or for the local market, not for shipping. Its very high quality, long season, and extreme hardiness make it a berry for areas where limited rainfall, heat, and drought and cold make use of older varieties difficult or impossible.

MINOR FAULTS

With all its merits it has two minor faults. During hot weather overripe berries may develop a slightly bitter taste. This bitterness appears only in berries that have been overlooked in picking and are overripe. Such berries can be identified by their dull skin color and discarded.

The second fault is the short fruiting

scapes which hide the berries under the leaves and make picking somewhat difficult. At times these short scapes are an advantage. Where birds are a problem short stems and hidden berries greatly reduce bird damage and growers like them. Likewise, in the spring and fall frost injury to flowers and fruit is much reduced by the protection of the foliage.

HIGH YIELD

Ogallala is high in yield. At North Platte it gives the highest yield of all varieties tested. At Iowa State College, in a two year trial, it was at the top of the list tying for first place with an unnamed selection. The Iowa test gave a total yield of over 14,000 quarts per acre with about 40% of the crop produced in the spring and 60% during summer and fall. This compares well with North Platte results.

Iowa also rated Ogallala as best for freezing and superior for heat processing. At Manhattan, Kansas, a cooperator reports Ogallala as far superior to other varieties in his trials and the station at Colby, Kansas, gives a similar report.

RANGE OF ADAPTATION

Ogallala appears well adapted to Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, most of North and South Dakota and in northern Missouri and western Minnesota. Tests in other parts of the country are incomplete and its adaptation in those areas unknown at present.

At Cheyenne, Wyoming, it is not fully hardy without some protection. At Bozeman, Montana, reports are favorable. Ogallala is well adapted to the area for which it was bred and promises fruit in areas where the older varieties are difficult. South of Kansas, fruit tends to be too small. The variety has not been tested west of the Rocky Mountains.

PEDIGREE

Ogallala has the pedigree F₁ (Rockhill x Cheyenne 3) x F₁ (Midland x Cheyenne