Strawberries and Companion Plants

Food plants · https://highdesertpermaculture.org/docs/food-plants/strawberries-and-companion-plants/

I've been trying to grow strawberries for many years. The critters always got most of the berries, I think lizards love them. There's nothing like a juicy berry in our dry summer heat!

I prefer everbearing to June bearing since I want them throughout the year. They do well in the desert under shade cloth and of course, watered regularly.

Ordered 50 Albion plants on Etsy from Scenic Hill Farm for $39.06:



/501954409/10-1000-albion-ever-bearing-strawberry

Hopefully, I'll remember to take some pics of the plants I got, the roots are amazing. Wish they hadn't been in the fridge for over a month, we'll see how they do.

Didn't have time to build the critter-proof strawberry bed I planned on. Finally, planted a few in the greenhouse and am working on prepping a planting area in the orchard garden.

Last year I planted in May and it was too hot and they died. Hopefully better luck this year.

There are many potential companion plants and I'm listing the plants I have or want to grow:

https://www.kellogggarden.com/blog/gardening/strawberry-companion-plants/

> ... The low-lying spread of strawberry plants makes them an optimal as a ground cover to control weeds around plants like **rhubarb, asparagus,** and **horseradish**.

- I'm sure the **rhubarb** died, but I probably still have seeds.
- Incredibly, despite the gophers, I have quite a few **asparagus** plants, and some need to be transplanted.
- Would love horseradish, have to look for roots. Does anyone have some to trade or buy?

> ...
>
> ### Asparagus
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> Asparagus and strawberries are natural interplanting partners in the garden bed. They spread their roots on alternate planes of the soil, and they both emerge from the ground soon after the last frost. These two garden mates use the soil effectively without competing with one another and contributes to nutrient return.

Makes sense!

> ### Bush Beans
>
> **Bush beans** work well to repel garden beetles and other pests that feed on strawberry plants. Beans also release beneficial nitrogen back into the soil as they grow, which feeds nearby strawberries and boosts their fruit production.

I think beans won't be able to take the wind where I'm planting the strawberries. Going to try them in the greenhouse again or other more sheltered locations. Thought about putting a 2-3 ft wall in that bed, but then there's too much shade on the north side. Would be nice to find some nitrogen fixers.

Caraway

Caraway attracts insects that feed on pests that can cause significant damage to strawberries. Such insects included parasitic flies and wasps that will protect strawberries from fruit seeking pests like aphids and mites.

Does caraway grow here? I haven't had any insect problems, it's the bigger critters, so far.

Catnip

Catnip deters damaging insects such as aphids and mites from destroying the leaves of strawberry plants. Strawberry plants are particularly prone to attracting both of these garden pests.

Catnip is highly invasive, I remember the days when I couldn't give it away anymore, had so much. But, it all died when the gophers invaded the hoophouse.

Chives

Chives are an herb that does double the work of most companion plants. Not only can growing **chives** close to your strawberries improve their flavor, but they also shield your plump red berries from unwanted destructive pests.

Love chives and will grow some more.

Yarrow

Yarrow attracts beneficial pollinators to your garden, which can boost the yield of your strawberries.

Got some established yarrow, maybe I'll transplant some.

> ### Onions
>
> These pungent vegetables make great strawberry companion plants. Their unappealing odor is a natural deterrent of many garden pests that feed on the leaves and fruits of the strawberry plant.

I wouldn't have thought that onions would improve strawberry flavor.

> ### Sage
>
> **Sage** is another one of those herbs that emit a strong odor and has also been successful in masking the sweet scent of your strawberries in the garden, making it more difficult for destructive pests to find your berries plants.

Got lots of culinary sage, and some others.

> ### Spinach
>
> Not only do spinach and strawberries make an excellent combination in the salad bowl, but they are also super compatible in the garden. Spinach contains saponins, which act as a natural repellent of destructive garden pests.

Too late to seed **spinach** now, but I got a few plants in the hydro tubs. Most don't grow as they should, so maybe it's time to get them in the ground.

> ### Thyme
>
> Thyme is a scented herb that repels certain varieties of parasitic worms that seek to destroy strawberry plants.

Clearly, some of those strawberries need to be planted in my culinary herb patch.

> ## Plants to Avoid in your Strawberry Patch
>
> Unfortunately, some plants are not meant to be interplanted and can cause the demise of your strawberries if they are used as companions. In this case, strawberry plants are prone to a disease called verticillium. **Plants like tomatoes, eggplant, potatoes, melons, peppers, roses, mint, and okra may actually contribute to this deadly disease in strawberry plants. It is essential to note that strawberries should not even be planted in beds that have recently housed those plants on this list.**
>
> Strawberries are also not the best companions for plants that are in the cabbage family. Not only aren't they good neighbors, but they are destructive neighbors, as they hamper the growth of cabbage family members. Common cabbage groupings include collard greens, kale cauliflower, kohlrabi, bok choy, and brussel sprouts.

Very good to know!

In addition to the companion plants at the Kellogg page, here are a few more:

https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/fruits/strawberry/strawberry-companion-plants.htm

> ... **Borage** – This herb is an all-around good guy, with attractive blooms that attract pollinators and beneficial insects, while strengthening strawberry plants' resistant to disease. Many gardeners claim that borage makes strawberries taste even sweeter.

I love borage, absolutely have to remember to put seeds out. Just need to find them.

> **Marigolds** – Strawberries and marigolds make a beautiful team, and the distinctive aroma of the sunny blooms discourages pests. French marigolds are believed to repel root knot nematodes, which can do considerable damage to strawberry plant roots.

They're on my list too and I have to get the FRENCH marigold seeds.

Alpine strawberry seeds

I recall ordering seeds at Baker Creek, need to find them. The berries are small, but the flavor is incredible.