

Could you please review with us how to properly plant a strawberry transplant?

No problem! The issue of correct strawberry transplanting in the field and garden is one which is of course quite relevant now as we are in the optimum planting time on the Central Coast.

Strawberry transplants should not be allowed to dry out at any time prior to or during planting, and it is best then to keep them in the shade once removed from the cooler or refrigerator. It goes without saying then that the soil should also be moist (not soaking wet) in preparation for receipt of the plant.

Make a hole sufficiently deep for all of the plant's roots to go into. The transplant should then be transferred to the hole in such a manner that all of the roots go straight down, without any pointing upwards, nor having the root tips up out of the ground and in the open air. As you would with any transplant, close the soil tightly around the roots once finished to make a good starting point for the plant to grow into.

The crown (the bulbous fleshy part of the plant between the roots and leaves) of the transplant should not be planted so deep that the top of the soil is covering it – nor too shallow which exposes too much of the crown and the upper parts of the feeder roots to drying. Ideally, the level of the soil should meet the middle of the crown.

Depending on the variety and amount of vigor expected, one should estimate a spacing of 10-12" between strawberry plants in a row, and 12" or so between the rows. Planting too close together initially will compromise air circulation and too far apart would be an inefficient use of the space available.

Once transplants have been put into the soil, be sure and follow up with a good soaking and continue to maintain a nice level of moisture as the plant establishes itself. Not only does this provide much needed moisture to the transplant, but it also sets the soil nicely around it by settling it and closing the pore spaces.

The above is an article about how to correctly transplant strawberries. For questions about this article or any others concerning strawberries or caneberries, please contact Mark Bolda at 763-8025 or mpbolda@ucanr.edu.