

YIELD OF 'QUINAULT' EVERBEARING STRAWBERRIES USING POLYETHYLENE MULCHES AND ROW COVERS

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Yields of 'Quinault' everbearing strawberries were compared during three seasons for plants grown under eight different mulch treatments with or without polyethylene row covers. In 1987, yields using clear polyethylene mulch with or without row covers (3.81 kg/m² and 3.45 kg/m², respectively) were significantly greater than all other mulch treatments. Yields ranged from 1.05 kg/m² to 2.60 kg/m² for black polyethylene; black over white two-sided, embossed polyethylene; black latex liquid; permeable landscape fabric; white over black two-sided, embossed polyethylene mulch, all with row covers or the unmulched control plot without a row cover. During the second year, yields using clear polyethylene mulch were significantly greater than all treatments except for black polyethylene (5.32 kg/m² and 4.74 kg/m², respectively). Yields for the other mulch treatments ranged from 3.55 kg/m² to 3.85 kg/m². The summer of 1988 was warmer than average which may account for the improved performance of the black polyethylene mulch. In 1989 results were similar to 1987 in which the clear polyethylene mulch had significantly higher yields (5.66 kg/m²) than all other mulches (2.12 - 4.31 kg/m²). Clear polyethylene mulch with or without row covers is recommended for everbearing strawberry production in Alaska.