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**The Ohio State University** College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

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## News from the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

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# Ohio State Strawberry Workshop is May 16

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PIKETON, Ohio - Strawberry growers can learn about new production methods and techniques during an Ohio State University strawberry plasticulture workshop May 16 that can help them extend their growing season and boost on-farm profits.

The workshop will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Ohio State University South Centers in Piketon, 1864 Shyville Road. Registration is \$5. The centers are part of Ohio State's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES).

The workshop will feature Brad Bergefurd, a horticulturist with Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC). Bergefurd will discuss the plasticulture production method, in which strawberries are planted in September and grow over the winter using plastic to keep the soil warm and suppress weed growth, which results in larger, sweeter berries during an earlier growing period, he said.

[OSU Extension](#) and OARDC are CFAES's outreach and research arms, respectively.

Thanks to the relatively new production method, Ohio consumers now can have access to locally grown strawberries as early as the first week of May and as late as October, according to the results of an ongoing OSU Extension research trial conducted by Bergefurd.

"The crops look good so far, and we expect about 50 to 100 people to be able to come out and learn in the classroom before heading out into our field trials to gain hands-on learning and instruction," he said.

The OSU Extension plasticulture trial includes about a half-acre of strawberry plants at the OSU South Centers and about 100 acres total on at least 25 farms statewide this season. The trial

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includes evaluating new strawberry varieties, with new selections being tested from Florida, California, Cornell University and North Carolina, Bergefurd said.

In addition to touring the plasticulture trials, participants will also learn about:

- Variety evaluations, including day-neutral (summer-bearing) strawberries.
- The use of white and black plastic mulch to modify soil temperature.
- Winter row cover management study results for freeze and frost protection.
- Drip irrigation.
- Fertigation management, with row covers, bed shaping, plastic laying and transplanting equipment on display.

Registration includes the program, handouts and refreshments. Contact Charissa McGlothlin at 740-289-2071, ext. 132, to register. The deadline to register is May 14.

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