

FRESH FORWARD



BREEDING & MARKETING

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Characteristics

- Midseason
- Excellent taste
- Beautiful presentation
- Easy to pick
- High return

Sonata, the perfect composition of taste and looks

Sonata is a mid-late season June bearer of a fruit with exceptionally good flavor qualities. Besides of the good taste, the strong point of Sonata is the abundantly setting of uniform fruits which are easy to pick. That makes Sonata in many cases an excellent alternative to Elsanta.

Sonata is suitable for the colder climate zone in Western Europe, chiefly north of the Alps. In early forcing cultures in a glasshouse Sonata is usually grown in spring by planting fresh plants in winter. As Sonata rarely produces deformed fruits, it is very suitable for this culture. Sonata is being used in nearly all outdoor cropping systems.

Fruit quality

Sonata produces juicy strawberries with a sweet taste and a clear strawberry aroma. Its robust, uniform fruit has a conical shape and a bright red color, light red on the inside. The pretty crown and the lovely shine, which are retained even after storage, are typical. The average fruit weight is higher than Elsanta's. The fruit is firm, but sometimes a bit sensitive to damage due to pressure. This might show up at high temperatures, but can be kept under control by an adequate picking frequency. Sonata strawberries are quite resistant to rain and do not split readily.

Flowering and harvest period

The quality of the flowers of Sonata is exceptionally good from the beginning of the season on. Since Sonata produces a great deal of pollen, the percentage of deformed fruit is very low. The flowering period and the harvest are at almost the same time as Elsanta's. As a rule, Sonata's harvest is better distributed. The inflorescences usually remain below the leaves. The optimal moment for picking is when the fruits have an orange red color. After picking the fruits will continue coloring, ending up in a bright red color.

Productivity

In general Sonata's yield is comparable to Elsanta, or slightly better. The numbers of fruits of first quality is clearly higher. Sonata is easy to pick as the fruit readily breaks off from the inflorescences. Because the labour for sorting the fruits is very limited too, saving on harvesting costs are high in comparison to Elsanta. Early forcing of Sonata hardly causes any loss in yield and quality.

Sensitivity to diseases

Sonata is rather insensitive to mildew (*Sphaerotheca mac.*). Propagators of Sonata plants must pay special attention to Crown rot (*Phytophthora cactorum*). Apart from controlling also preventive measures have to be carried out carefully. The same applies to Root rot (*Rhizoctonia*). Because of the short rhizome of Sonata also the planting requires attention. Growth will be hampered when planted too deep.

Cultivation experiences

When planted in August in a normal cropping





for use in the first sixty day crops. The variety can be forced well with a plastic cover or a culture in a plastic tunnel.

Sonata is not so much used in a continuous culture in glasshouses because of the moderate color in autumn, especially in periods with low light intensity. Sonata is very suitable for early forcing in a glasshouse because of the excellent fruit set and the high production level. The nearly complete absence of misshapen fruits is a big advantage compared to Elsanta.

system or as a frigo plant in spring Sonata develops a heavy vegetation. A planting distance of 35 to 40 cm is in many cases desirable. The inflorescences are somewhat deeply hidden under the foliage, which protects the flowers from late night frost and later from solarisation. Proper preventive spraying against Botrytis and Rhizoctonia is very important at that time. Sonata is particularly suitable for early cultivation and

Sonata is barely sensitive to frost and thus is also suitable for cultivation in Scandinavia, where the variety is widely used meanwhile. However, it must be covered there in winter with a fleece. Sonata is less suitable for delaying production with straw.

Sonata requires a great deal of magnesium because of the slow uptake of it. Compared to Elsanta Sonata easily requires 20% more of magnesium, in the propagation as well as in the production fields. Also the nitrogen supply requires attention. If magnesium in the plant is at a right level, less nitrogen will do. A balanced amount of trace elements (iron, manganese) is essential. It is evident that it is important to keep an eye on the nutrient level of the crop.

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Information obtained from outdoor trials in the Netherlands

	Sonata	Elsanta
Relative yield class I in relation to Elsanta (%)	115	100
Average fruit weight(g)	19,5	18
Taste*	4,5	3,5
Fruit firmness*	4,0	4,0
Vulnerability fruit skin*	3,5	3,5
Shelf life*	3,5	2,5
General fruit evaluation*	4	3

* Scale: 1-5. The higher the mark, the better the firmness, shelf life and general evaluation and the lesser the vulnerability of the fruit skin.

About Fresh Forward

Fresh Forward ranks among Europe's leading breeders of strawberry varieties. The company is a spinoff of the Dutch University of Wageningen, with which it still cooperates in the field of research.

The company's breeding efforts focus on three programmes: short day varieties, day-naturel varieties and a Mediterranean programme.

Fresh Forward first became known for its single-cropping varieties. After Sonata it introduced varieties such as Rumba and Jive. The South-European variety Calinda is the first outcome of the Mediterranean programme. Recently Fresh Forward has introduced another strawberry variety: Opera. This variety is suitable for cultivation in greenhouses and table tops.

The names that Fresh Forward has chosen for its varieties all refer to music and dance styles.