

Ruby June, a popular new strawberry variety for the Mid-South

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The best protection, or guard, against the stagnation of a strawberry industry, is a NEW VARIETY! And, over the last 7 years, Dr. Barclay Poling, Professor Emeritus, NC State, has been actively working with a number of North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia farmers to come up with new varieties that can be profitably grown in our region of the country.

*Ruby June – an early success story!* At one location in eastern North Carolina (Cottle Farms, Faison, NC), Dr. Poling has been conducting a very intensive variety and advanced selection strawberry testing program in cooperation with Cottle Farms and the Lassen Canyon Strawberry Breeding program.

Over the course of the last five (5) strawberry growing seasons, beginning in in the 2015-2016, Poling and his team of cooperators, including Mr. Whit Jones, Farm Manager, Cottle Farms, have identified a promising new short day variety from the Lassen Canyon Breeding program called Ruby June. Poling said, “Ruby June has the potential to become a very profitable new variety for our region. It is exceptionally high in fruit quality, and is only five days later in ripening than Sweet Charlie.”

Ruby June’s marketable yields compare favorably with Chandler and Camarosa, and what is especially notable is how evenly Ruby June spreads its crop over a full 5-6 week season (i.e. it doesn’t ‘concentrate’ its crop like many older varieties).

Nursery producers also like how easy it is to propagate Ruby June, and our research studies in Faison have shown that Ruby June produces equally well as a plug or cut-off plant. One thing that wholesalers and fresh market shippers like about Ruby June is that the fruit does not darken significantly in the cooler (like Camino Real and Camarosa), maintaining a bright color.



Fig. 1. Ruby June is a new short day strawberry from the California-based breeding program of Lassen Canyon.