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## Strawberries Fields Forever

Local, strawberry production is ripening into full fruit production. Strawberries are a cool season commodity; thus, hot weather will stop production. Therefore, April, May, and early June is strawberry season in S.C. Time flies so don't miss the strawberry season. For me strawberry season brings back memories of dad's garden, cool springs, and my youth. Mama loved to cook cakes and pies out of the tasty fruit, but after all eight of us kids had visited the patch not much was left. Dad's patch produced small but tasty fruit and it took a lot of work to get a belly full. Glad I was young and energetic. Today the fruit is large, sometimes bigger than golf balls, but just as tasty as dad's. One of the best parts of my job is helping the local strawberry growers produce their scrumptious crop, and of course sampling the fruit in each field is important to insure quality fruit.

Let's hit the road and search out the local strawberry farms. Heading east from Florence, we first come to Triple R Farms located on Hoffmeyer Road just across the Darlington County Line. Then, McLeod Farms is located on Highway 151 between Hartsville and McBee.

Heading south from Florence, we first come to Cottle Strawberries on Highway 76 toward Timmons ville. Next Gowdy Farms located on Highway 378 between Lake City and Turbeville. Finally, Poston Farms is located just off Highway 378 in Poston's Corner which is near Kingsburg

Heading west from Florence, the only strawberry farm I work with is Atkinson Farms which is located on Highway 917 just out of Mullins. Many of these farms also sell through many vendors including those at the Pee Dee State Farmers Market. Also, many sell other fruits, vegetables, and ornamentals. Remember to make fresh S.C. strawberries a major part of your celebration of spring.

To learn the specifics on gardening we have both free and for-sale publications at our office in the back of the Public Services Building on the corner of Third Loop and Irby. You may also visit our Home & Garden Information Center through our web site at [www.clemson.edu/florence](http://www.clemson.edu/florence). I may be contacted through our web site, [amelton@clemson.edu](mailto:amelton@clemson.edu), or 661-4800.

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