

Evaluation of ten strawberry cultivars and hybrids and the effect of organic calcite fertiliser

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The growing of cultivars adapted to local conditions and appropriate fertilising can significantly increase productivity and quality of strawberry. The aim of this research was to evaluate some newly introduced strawberry cultivars and perspective hybrids and to evaluate the effect of organic calcite fertiliser (Megagreen®) on strawberry yield, fruit quality and spreading of pests and diseases. The trial was established in 2012 at Pūre, Tukums municipality. Cultivars ‘Saint Pierre’, ‘Annapolis’, ‘Sonata’, ‘Chambly’, ‘Elegance’, ‘Rumba’, ‘Honeoye’, ‘Senga Sengana’ and two hybrids — 35-1 and 39-1 were included in the investigation. Organic calcite fertiliser was applied four times per season in 2013 and 2014 by spraying on leaves in concentration 0.5 %. Strawberries were grown on two row beds with black plastic mulch and drip irrigation. The evaluation was done for two seasons. None of evaluated newly introduced cultivars and hybrids had higher winter hardiness and yield than control cultivar ‘Senga Sengana’, however the most of them expressed better fruit quality and resistance to diseases. Strawberries ‘Sonata’, ‘Saint Pierre’, ‘Rumba’, ‘Elegance’, ‘Annapolis’ and 39-1 were selected as the most promising ones for growing in Latvia. The application of organic calcite fertiliser (Megagreen®) had no statistically significant influence on strawberry. However some cultivars showed positive response to the application of the fertiliser.

Keywords: *Fragaria ×ananassa* Duchesne ex Rozier, fruit quality, harvesting season, pest and disease resistance, yield