

## Gaston Grower Spotlight- May 2021



### **A Mild Winter and Abundant May**

We have all heard the expression April showers bring May flowers. March and April flowers along with a mild winter however have brought our county a bumper crop of strawberries this picking season. Pictured above is a crop of Lineberger's Maple Spring Farm galletta strawberries. Galletta strawberries are a large fruiting early ripening variety released by Dr. Jim Ballington, of NC State University in 2010. They also have an abundance of Sweet Charlie strawberries which is one of the most popular commercial varieties and offer great flavor eaten straight from the plant. A good crop in May gives folks (especially families) a nice window of time to get out to the farm and get the experience of picking before the temperatures get too hot. Check out [Lineberger's Maple Spring Farm](#) for more details and times to visit.

### **Innovated Mite Management**

A mild winter and proper frost protection played a large factor into the great crop Lineberger's has this year, however there is more than meets the eye to their success. Strawberries being an earlier fruiting

crop will be the first visited by pest overwintering on weeds in the field. These pests enter the crop field before many of their natural predators and can make impacts on plant health and yield. Two-spotted spider mites are one of these pest in strawberries but Lineberger's introduces a predatory mite species (in March) in order to reduce the impacts of two-spotted spider mite damage. Introducing beneficial predators is one way our growers are utilizing a natural approach to pest management to boost yield potential and it is growing in popularity within our county. [Watch this video](#) from Lineberger's Facebook page discussing the predatory mite application for some grower insight.



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