

FRESH FORWARD



BREEDING & MARKETING

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Opera, a full-bodied beauty with high yields

Opera is a variety from Fresh Forward's breeding programme of short-day varieties. Opera combines a range of exceptional characteristics such as large fruit, a beautiful shine and a very high picking rate. These characteristics make Opera an excellent alternative to Elsanta in (greenhouse) table-top cultivation.

Characteristics

- Greenhouse and (summer) table-top cultivation
- Large, juicy fruit
- High 1st Class yield
- Very shiny
- High picking rate

Cultivation

Opera is a midseason short-day variety whose harvest period starts around the same time as that of Elsanta. Opera requires little crop maintenance. Due to its long flower trusses and upright plant habit the flower trusses are easily separated from the leaves. Additionally, dead leaves are easily removed.

The pollen-rich flowers are highly attractive to bees and bumble bees. The long flower stalks emerge at an even rate, resulting in an excellent spread of the harvest. Even the last fruits of Opera grow to a good size, resulting in a long harvest period. The average fruit weight of Opera is very high throughout the harvest period, resulting in a high percentage of class I fruit and a very high picking rate.

Opera is a vital variety, with little risk of diseases. It is fairly resistant to both crown rot (*Phytophthora cactorum*) and powdery mildew (*Podosphaera aphanis*).

Table-top cultivation in summer:

The variety is most suitable for table-top cultivation, in which it will produce strawberries of a good size, flavour and shine even at summery temperatures. Its yields and fruit weight are considerably higher than those of Elsanta, implying the advantage of greater harvests.

Experiences gained in double cropping:

The past few years, good experiences have been gained with Opera in double cropping. Opera has a lower cold requirement than Elsanta, the plants will more readily elongate and produce fewer malformed fruits in spring. Opera does require higher doses of spore elements, in particular zinc, iron and manganese. Growers are advised to give their crops high doses of potassium once they start flowering, to guarantee a good fruit quality.

Retail

Opera produces attractive, large, juicy, intensely red strawberries with a very shiny skin and a good shelf life. The Opera strawberries' attractive look offers an advantage for retailers.

Opera is protected by Plant Breeders' Rights and traded under licence.



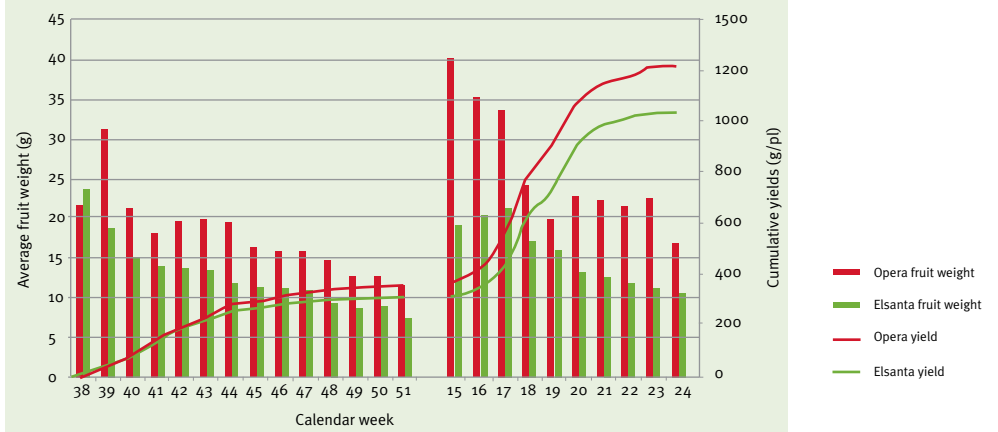


Information obtained in greenhouse table-top trials in the Netherlands

Comparison in table-top cultivation	Opera	Elsanta
Class I Yield (g)	600	575
% Class I Yield	93	90
Average fruit weight (g)	27	20
Fruit firmness*	4.5	3.5
Skin firmness*	4.0	3.2
General fruit evaluation*	3.7	3.0

* Scale: 1-5. The higher the mark, the better the (skin) firmness and general evaluation.

Average fruit weight and cumulative yield of Opera and Elsanta in the greenhouse



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, everbearing varieties and a Mediterranean programme.

Fresh Forward first became known for its single-cropping varieties. After Sonata it introduced varieties such as Rumba, Jive and Allegro. The South-European variety Calinda is the first outcome of the Mediterranean programme. Fresh Forward is now introducing Opera, a short day strawberry variety that is suitable for cultivation in greenhouses and table tops.