



Effects of Grass and Plastic Mulch on Growth and Yield of Strawberries (*Fragaria x ananassa*) in Kiambu County, Kenya

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1 ABSTRACT

Strawberry (*Fragaria x ananassa*) is one of the fruit crops cultivated in many parts of the world. It is rich in vitamin C and other nutrients like carbohydrates and protein. In addition to being consumed fresh, strawberries can be dried and their flavour is popular in industries that manufacture foods, beverages, perfumes and cosmetics. Failure to conserve water in strawberry production by the soil poses great challenges to strawberry growers in Kenya including low yields and poor growth. The aim of the study was to evaluate the ability of mulch to conserve moisture and increase growth and yield of strawberries. The study was conducted at Kenyatta University research farm for three months with the treatments being black plastic mulch, clear plastic mulch, grass mulch, and no mulch, arranged in a completely randomized block design and each treatment replicated thrice. Data collected included the number of fruits, flowers, leaves, runners, buds per runner and fruit weight. Data was subjected to analysis of variance at 5% level of significance using SAS version 9.1. The results showed that mulches had better plant performance in the studied parameters. However, grass mulch proved to be more suitable for improving plant performance than the other mulches thus mulches should be used for better strawberry yield.
