



International Union of Soil Sciences

Rosalind and the fairy *Fragaria* (*Fragaria* sp.)

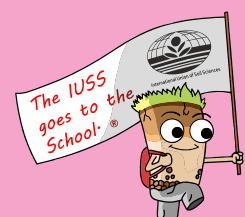
Authors: Laura Diez Yarade¹ y Gabriela Fernández^{1, 2}

¹ Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of the National University of Jujuy.

² INTA AER Perico.

Illustrations: Mercedes Gómez Borús (9 years old) y Benjamín Noceti (9 years old)

Translation: Jean Pierre Commeau. Soil Science Society of Canada.



Rosalind and the fairy Fragaria

Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Rosalinda. She had a beautiful garden with many vegetables. One day she thought that it would be very nice to have in the corner of the greenhouse a good dessert, sweet, tasty, delicious.

She thought so intensely that when she opened her eyes, a Fairy appeared.

- Hello Rosalinda, how are you? I am the Fairy Fragaria, and I was listening to your request.

At first, Rosalinda was surprised, but she loved to see the Fairy in her red and green dress.

- Hello Fairy Fragaria..., you know my name!

- Of course, Rosalinda, I also know that you want to have a nice dessert in your garden, and I have the solution. You can grow the Frutilla or Strawberry, which is how it is known in many countries. Its scientific name is *Fragaria sp.* listen carefully to how you can grow it:





The strawberry is ideal for planting in the gardens, also for balconies and pots; it is easy to grow and does not take up much space.

We can have it all year round if we take care of it. We can plant it in spring, but also in autumn when there will not be many weeds in our garden.

- What great news *Fragaria*, so I can have a yummy dessert!

- Of course, *Rosalinda*: Being a small plant, it does not take up much space and gives us a rich fruit from autumn to late spring.

In the summer, this plant has children or small plants that if they are left in the air, we can place them in the soil and once they have good roots, carefully cut the stem that joins them to the mother.

That way, we will have more strawberry plants to harvest the following year.

- I want to grow this delicious dessert; how can I cultivate the strawberry?

- The first thing you have to do is to have the place ready where you are going to place the seedlings.

-Oh, yes, seedlings, does that mean that they are like little plants?

- Exactly, Rosalinda, it is very, very important that the soil where the strawberries grow is healthy and has all the nutrients because this way, the strawberry will also grow healthy.

- Well, Fairy Fragaria in my garden the soils are very dark, they have earthworms, we have a compost bin on the side, and we are very good at growing food! Our vegetables are so tasty, and so I can cultivate the strawberries there.

- Choose a place in your garden and get the seedlings. Then, you can make holes in the soil with a little stick, every 30 centimeters or so, and you can plant them there.

It is both recommended and convenient that you cover the soil around your seedlings with dry grass; this will help to prevent weeds from growing and the fruit from getting dirty.

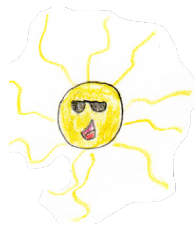
- Don't worry if at the beginning of the harvest season, you have a few fruits, and they ripen slowly. **You have to be patient** because when it's a little warmer, you will harvest every day and a lot of very nutritious fruit.

Strawberries have a lot of vitamin C and will protect you from getting sick, besides being delicious.

- Perfect, I will see where to obtain the seedlings, something else that I must know?

- Yes, I show you how you should take care of them.

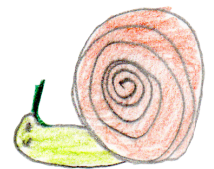
They need a lot of



every 4 or 5 days in autumn-winter and more often when it starts to get hot (2 or 3 days)

Nutrients: once a month, we can add a spoonful of worm compost per plant to the soil so that the plants remain strong, healthy; and the fruit is tasty.

Attention! We must be very attentive to the



and the



as well as the



They can cause damage to the plants and fruits.

- How nice, dear Fragaria, I can already imagine how I'm going to enjoy them!

- Yes, Rosalinda, don't forget that you should always wash your hands well and also wash the fruits, so that

you can eat them directly in desserts, in cakes, or as jams with whipped cream. And of course, share them with the whole family. Bye, I have to go.

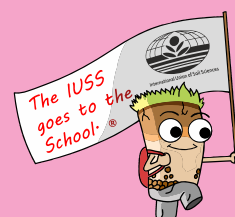
- Thank you very much for your teachings and your advice. I hope to see you very soon to share my delicious strawberries with you.

And that is the end of the story, and these strawberries ... have been devoured.





International Union of Soil Sciences



Editor: Dr. Laura Bertha Reyes Sánchez

#TheSoilIsLife