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**MASTODON—Biggest Everbearing Strawberry Known**

—:—

**HISTORY**  
*of The*  
**MASTODON**

(Revised 2nd Edition)

**By**

**B. W. KEITH**

—:—

**Keith Bros. Nursery**  
**Sawyer, Michigan**

(Copyrighted, 1928)



B. H. Keith  
"BUD"



B. W. Keith  
"BERT"

*The*  
**STRAWBERRY TWINS**



**"THE HISTORY OF THE MASTODON"**

"These two strawberry twins have spent five years of hard, expensive toil, bringing before the public the world's greatest everbearing strawberry, the Mastodon.

"They have grown, fruited and experimented with the Mastodon under garden and field culture for four years and have done more to develop its worth than any other concern.

"And now their untiring efforts are rewarded by the praises of thousands of satisfied customers who are enjoying fresh, luscious strawberries from their own gardens and fields all during the Summer and Fall, as well as in the Springtime."

Signed:

H. J. LURKINS,  
County Agri. Agent.  
Berrien County,  
St. Joseph, Mich.

# HISTORY

*of the*

# MASTODON

*The World's Largest Everbearing Strawberry*

*by*

*B. W. Keith*

(Revised 2nd Edition)

About eleven years ago, there was captured in the berry jungles of north-central Indiana an "elephant of the strawberry family," which, owing to its mammoth size, was called the Mastodon, after the monster that used to roam the swampy wilds of North Central America.

The old man who "captured" this Elephantine berry found, after he had tamed it down for domestic purposes, that he had a wonder and kept it to himself for a few years. The secret finally leaked out when the old gentleman sold and gave some of the "baby" Mastodon to his friends and neighbors, and the wonder spread like wildfire. Soon after this, satisfactory arrangements were made with a Nurseryman in the vicinity to list and sell a crop of young Mastodon for the old man.

The foregoing paragraphs have been somewhat allegorical, but they convey the idea that the Mastodon Everbearing Strawberry started in north-central Indiana in Miami County, near Peru. The originator is Mr. George Voer, who crossed the Kellogg's Prize, a late ripening Spring variety on the Superb, an everbearer. Berries developed and matured from this cross and the seeds from them were saved and planted, resulting in a few seedlings, seven of which developed into bearing plants. One plant out of these seven seedlings stood far ahead of the other six and this was named Mastodon, because of its mammoth size. Owing to its worthy characteristics, as compared with other everbearing strawberries known at that time, the Mastodon soon became very popular in the vicinity of its home.

After the arrangements were made with the Nurseryman to advertise and sell the plants, everything went well for awhile—the variety was given publicity, growers became eager and enthusiastic, consequently the Nurseryman sold and booked a



### PLANTING MASTODON IN THE SPRING

large number of plants. But when he began to dig the plants and remove them from the old man's fields to fill his booked orders, great excitement occurred in camp. It was said, the old gentleman began to realize that his plants were "going out into the world," and the feeling of "keeps" began to predominate again, so much so that he ordered the nurseryman off his fields and forbade him return. Of course, this excitement gave the variety more publicity, consequently growers' wants were greater than ever.

News of the variety reached our Nursery in the spring of 1924 and arrangements were made to secure thirty-seven hundred Mastodon plants of the original stock. These plants were set in our nursery rows beside other varieties of everbearing strawberries for comparison. All varieties were given the same care and close check was kept on all, but this new variety yielded more and larger berries and its excelling characteristics were very noticeable. Visitors could hardly content themselves with the idea that this was an everbearing strawberry, because of the many blossoms and big berries on the vines. They were more ready to believe they were looking at a heavy-fruited spring variety fruiting out of season, but it was a new and different kind of an everbearer, the like of which they had never seen before.

For five years we have been testing and fruiting this Mastodon variety commercially, as well as in gardens, and find that it is very consistent

**B. A. Woodsworth, Westport, Ore.—**

*"Mastodon are all you claim and more. Production far exceeded my expectations. I expect to use nothing else this coming year."*



### PICKING THE SAME SUMMER □

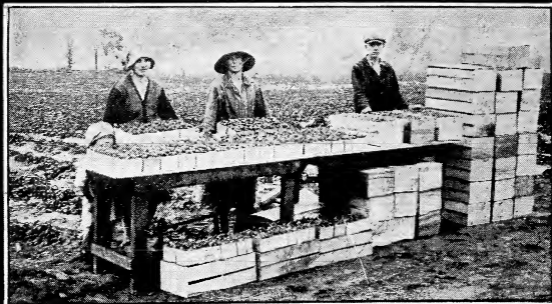
in its ability to produce yields of big berries all through the Summer and Fall of the same year the plants are set, beginning in about ninety days after the plants are set in the ground. We have also found that it will produce a good crop of berries in the Spring like any of the Spring varieties, after fruiting all the Summer before.

## **\$956.70 Per Acre in the Spring**

Here's what Mastodon did for us as a Spring berry:—

From  $\frac{2}{3}$  of an acre that fruited heavily all the Summer and Fall before, we picked and sold to buyers 5,300 quarts, bringing us \$639.00. This yield ran above yields of any of the common Spring varieties fruited in this great berry section. This goes to show that Mastodon is also a good profitable Spring variety, enabling growers to get two crops of fine berries in the same time they have been getting but one with common strawberries.

After this Spring crop is harvested, if the plants are given good care, they will begin to send out blossoms for a third crop which begins to ripen their berries in August of the second Summer, continuing until freezing Fall weather. This makes three crops of berries within eighteen months after the plants are set, and ripe berries can be had ten months out of these eighteen. The plants are good for at least another year's fruiting, thus making one planting last three years.



This picture was taken last day of October. We picked 880 qts. that day from about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres of our large 30-acre field of Mastodon shown in the background

These possibilities, which are not all found in the common run of everbearing strawberries, places Mastodon at the head of the list in a class by itself. Mastodon makes it possible to have fresh strawberries from strawberry-time in the Spring until freezing weather in the Fall.

Mastodon is now the most highly advertised everbearing variety, and is by far the most profitable among berry growers and nurserymen, because of its large continuous yields of big berries all during the everbearing season of Summers and Falls, and its ability to also produce a large profitable yield of large marketable berries the next spring—two crops instead of one every year.

Not only berry growers, gardeners, and nurserymen find Mastodon to be a wonderful everbearing variety, but leading State Experiment Stations make favorable reports, as follows:

**Prof. Loree of Michigan State College—**

“So far I believe the Mastodon is doing the best of any of the Everbearing varieties which we have in our test plots.”

**Prof. Stevens at Storrs, Conn.  
Experimental Station—**

“Most of the plants grew and made the best growth of any variety of fall bearing berries I have ever had. There is also a considerable amount of fruit on each plant and of very nice quality and size.”

*“The Mastodon plants are bearing heavy since August 15th. Real large berries of excellent flavor.”*

Bert Govier—Fennimore, Wis.





**Picking Mastodon Berries After Snowfall in Late Fall**

**Minnesota Experimental Station—**

**Supt. Hodgson wrote us in part on August 2nd.—**

**“The Fall crop is now beginning to ripen and I note the Mastodon are loaded with berries, in fact I would estimate that the one row of Mastodon has set about as much fruit as any other four rows in the plot. The old plants of Mastodon look good for a quart of berries apiece.”**

**State College, Washington—**

**Prof. Harry Jensen,**

**“The Mastodon plants we have, have been producing an abundant quantity of strawberries in the late Summer and Fall, bearing more than any other variety we have on our planting. The berries are large and of good quality.”**

**MASTODON PLANTS:—**

Like all other characteristics of the Mastodon, its plants show that largeness which predominates in all characteristics of the variety. They are large, vigorous, and very hardy with heavy large, medium, dark green leaves. They have a deep, well-developed root system which gives them the ability to withstand severe winter weather, as well as drought during the summertime. When grown under the Hill System, one individual plant will have a leaf spread equal to a half-bushel basket. They also have the characteristic of forming many crowns when grown under this system of culture.

(Continued on Page 10)

*“The Mastodon have done wonderful. We are now (Sept. 10) picking many nice, large good-tasting berries.”*

G. F. Wenger, Denver, Colo.



Aren't they big ones, and they are just as sweet and good as they are big.



**MASTODON**  
**18 Berries per Quart**

A New,  
Different  
Kind of  
Everbearing  
Strawberry

Mastodon is a new everbearing strawberry that is revolutionizing the strawberry business. It makes it possible to have plenty of big, ripe, juicy strawberries all during the Summer and Fall, also each Spring, Summer and Fall, for three years, all from one planting. It needs no special soil nor care to produce its big crops of large berries. Set them out and care for them just like you would any strawberry and they will begin to bear in about 90 days.

Mastodon has no fear for frosts. If the blossoms are frozen in the Spring, like strawberry blossoms sometime are, a new set will immediately form and you will have berries regardless. This isn't so with common strawberries.

**BERRIES LIKE THESE IN 90 DAYS**

Set the plants out in the Spring any time from the time you would make early garden until corn-planting time, and in about 90 days they will begin to bear their big, beautiful berries and keep on bearing from then until freezing fall weather. The berries don't "run" small during the hot days of the Summer like the common everbearers do. You can always have big luscious berries from the Mastodon, and they will be just as sweet and delicious at all times as they are big. Mastodon has no equal in the Strawberry Family.



**Picking Mastodon in August from Plants Set in the Spring**

(Continued from page 7)

Plants produce a number of vigorous runners on which are formed strong, hardy young plants, numerous enough to make a good wide picking row before Fall. The plants that develop in the early part of the growing season, say July or early August, will produce berries before the middle of October. The writer has noticed that some young plants send out blossoms before they have taken root, however, this is not very common and is not altogether a good characteristic of varieties that do this consistently.

#### **MASTODON BERRY:—**

The Mastodon berry is extra large. We have picked them where 18 fill a quart (9 on top and 9 on the bottom)—5 laid end to end measure 8 inches, and many of them are over 5 inches around. They are of a uniform size all through the season. At no time do they run small. They are just as large in September, October, and November as they are during July and August, the first of the everbearing season. This uniform large size all through the everbearing season is one of the outstanding features of the variety. The berries of the Spring crop are also large, well colored and of good flavor.

The berry has a medium, dark glossy red, color evenly distributed all over the berry. When it is ripe it is red all over—no green tips nor half-ripe berries, unless the berry is partly covered with soil after rains, even then it isn't green, but of a

**Mrs. W. L. Meeks, R.F.D. 2, Enon Valley, Pa.—**

*"One berry measured around thickest part 5 inches and from stem around to stem 5 1-2 inches. largest berries I ever saw."*



**Picking Mastodon Berries in the Spring from Plants that Fruited All the Summer and Fall Preceding. 5300 Quarts of Berries Were Picked from  $\frac{2}{3}$  of an Acre in the Spring.**

whitish red color. Its attractive red color extends all through the berry and there are no lumpy, colorless cores.

The seeds of a Mastodon berry are very attractive—a bright yellow. They stand out quite prominent on the surface of the berry, in this way, resembling one of its parents, the Superb.

Any one who likes a good, well-flavored strawberry will never turn down the Mastodon, because it has a very good, pleasing flavor. During the five years that we have been marketing Mastodon berries, we have never had found a customer who refused to accept a quart of Mastodon, because of their flavor or quality. They might be termed a mild, sub-acid berry of good quality and flavor; firm, extra large, evenly colored, with a glossy medium to dark red color,—and very attractive.

#### **MASTODON BLOSSOMS:—**

Mastodon blossoms are perfect and need no other blossoms near them to develop into berries, that is they are capable of fertilizing themselves. They are numerous, depending upon the age of the plant. As high as 100 blossoms and berries have been counted in the Fall on plants set that Spring.

They are as near frost-proof as any strawberry blossom, but when they are killed by late spring frosts, another set forms and comes right on and produces a crop of berries regardless. The only thing that stops production in this line is the freezing winter weather in the late Fall.

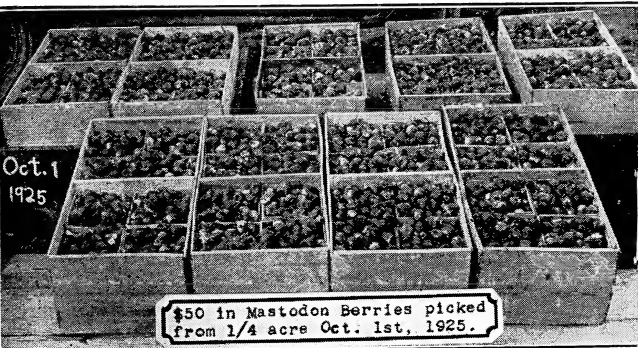


← Mastodon Rows left Common Everbearers on the right →

## Mastodon a good Plant Maker

The above picture taken Oct. 17, 1925, shows how Mastodon (see left half picture) make a good wide picking row of strong plants when the common varieties of everbearers (see right half of picture) do not. The plants were all set at the same time (April 1925), in the same soil, and given the same care, but note how much better the Mastodon make. They also produced many more berries. During the second week in September of that same year, the Mastodon shown in the above picture yielded at the rate of 576 qts. per one-day's picking and sold at 35c per quart (\$201.60 per acre per day's picking).

Mastodon are a good plant maker under just ordinary care and soil. If intensive cultivation is practiced and the soil is made rich, especially in nitrogen, there will be a much larger plant growth, often at the sacrifice of fruit production, therefore soil for the best Mastodon berry production need not be above the average in richness required for common strawberries.



\$50 in Mastodon Berries picked from 1/4 acre Oct. 1st, 1925.

## \$50 for 1-4 Acre Per Day

The above picture shows one day's yield of big Mastodon berries from 1/4 acre. These nine crates (144 qts.) sold for \$50 at our Roadside Stand.



### MR. BURLEW'S MASTODON PATCH OF 1,000 PLANTS

The above picture shows Mr. Burlew's Mastodon patch at Concord, Michigan. He set only 1,000 plants and sold over \$100 in berries the first Summer and Fall (1st crop) and \$112 the next Spring (2nd crop), over \$200 inside of a year and the bed was still bringing him in money at the time this booklet was written.

## When They Bear

We try to explain and show our friends just when Mastodon plants produce their crops of big berries, but to make it more clearly understood we give the following (These crops are all from one planting):—

**1ST CROP:—**Set plants in April (Spring); begin picking ripe berries in July (90 days); continue with increasing yields through August, September, October into November, when plants freeze up for Winter.

**2ND CROP:—**This comes in Spring, May and June, at common strawberry-time. This is called the Spring crop and is as large as that from any of the common strawberries.

**3RD CROP:—**This comes the second Summer and Fall, beginning generally in August and lasting until cold freezing Fall weather. If the weather is not dry and hot during the ripening of the Spring crop, there will be a continuous yield from June (the Spring crop) until winter sets in.

**OTHER CROPS:—**During the 2nd Spring there will be a fourth crop followed by a fifth during the Summer and Fall. The fact is Mastodon will bear Spring, Summer, and Fall for three years or more if the plants are given proper attention.



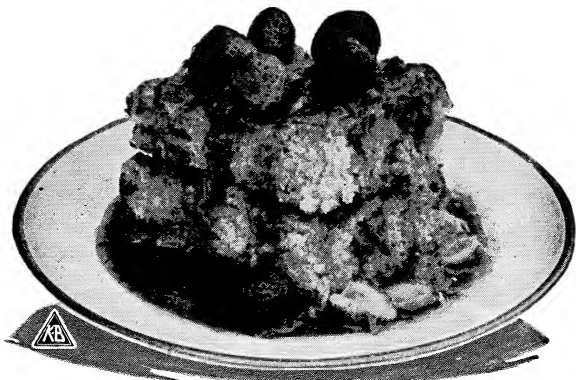
**Mastodon Make  
the Best of  
Preserves**

**MASTODON FOR PRESERVING, SHORTCAKES,  
DESSERT, ETC.**

Some folks have the idea that Everbearing Strawberries are tasteless, and no good for dessert, preserving, etc. This might be with some varieties, but not so with the Mastodon. They are fine for these uses. We "put up" Mastodon only at our house. As stated on page 11, we have been marketing Mastodon at our roadside stand for five years, and never yet have we had a customer who did not like the Mastodon. Everybody pronounced them grand.

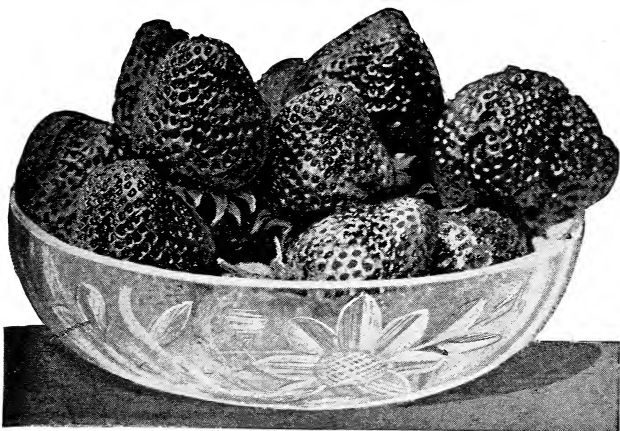
If space permitted, we could give you hundreds of letters from those who find Mastodon the best.

Prof. Baker, of Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind., writes: "The berries were excellent size, good appearance and very pleasing quality."



**Oh, Boy! Mastodon Shortcake all Summer and Fall—  
none more delicious**





**HOW ARE THESE FOR SIZE,—JUST AS GOOD, TOO!**

**WHEREBY THE MASTODON EXCELLS**

Never before such a Berry as the Mastodon. A Strawberry Different from the rest. To give you the possibilities of the Mastodon Everbearing Strawberry in "a nutshell," we sum them up as follows:

1. The very best for the home garden or Field Culture.
2. Bears berries in 90 days after plants are set in Spring.
3. Bears two crops instead of one every year.
4. Largest of any known Everbearing Strawberry.
5. Easily grown, needs no special care or soil.
6. Berries uniform and large from beginning to end of season instead of running small like other everbearers.
7. Yields of big berries increase from July until October.
8. Bears profitable crops of berries not only in Summer and Fall, but the following Spring also, then the next Summer and Fall for three years.
9. Berries sweet, firm, well colored throughout,—none better for shortcake, desserts, preserves, canning, etc.
10. Equally as good for either Hill or Matted row Culture.
11. Production not stopped by adverse weather conditions,—through droughts, or wet weather they bear right along.
12. Spring frosts do not stop production. If blossoms are killed others form immediately and develop into another crop.

**Why Be Content With Common Varieties When You Can Grow Mastodon As Easy And Have Fresh Strawberries All Spring, Summer And Fall?**

**NOTE:—We issue a Catalogue on leading varieties of Strawberries, Raspberries, Blackberries, Grapes, Roses, Shrubs, etc. It's FREE. Send postal for it. It pictures and describes the Mastodon thoroughly.**

Name .....

Town..... RFD.....

State and Street..... State.....



### MR. AND MRS FRED L. PETTY

Folks, this is Mr. and Mrs. Fred L. Petty from  
Radio Station WLS—

Thousands of listeners to WLS have heard Mr. Petty announce The Dinner Bell Programmes from WLS, but very few listeners have ever seen him or his picture. Here he is with Mrs. Petty in our Mastodon field. Take note what she is doing and what he is trying to do. Mr. Petty got on the outside of that big Mastodon berry, but it took a bite or two.

Below is what he wrote us regarding the Mastodon. Note that Mrs. Petty can make some short-cakes,—she used Mastodon.

Aug. 10, 1927

"Gentlemen:—

"I thought I was a real Mastodon enthusiast even before my visit to your farm at Sawyer on July 31st. I knew of the extra size, fine flavor, good shipping qualities and persistent bearing habits of the Mastodon.

"However, after seeing your 30 acre field of Mastodons set last spring and gathering and sampling unlimited numbers of large ripe berries on July 31st from plants set 100 days before, I became doubly a booster for this remarkable variety.

"I suppose that you must have gathered some hundreds of crates of ripe berries right in mid-summer, in advance of the heavy fall fruiting. The berries which Mrs. Petty brought home that day carried perfectly, and after keeping them for two days in the icebox they were made into as fine a shortcake as anyone could wish. We have about stopped saying 'strawberries.' We mostly say 'Mastodons' now.

"Yours very truly,  
Fred L. Petty,  
Director of Farm and Market  
Programs, Radio Station WLS."