

## VOICE OF THE GROWER - USE CASE

### PREVENTING FROST DAMAGE IN STRAWBERRIES

Strawberry plants are susceptible to frost damage in spring and fall, which is a concern for strawberry producers. Strawberry plants bloom in early spring, often before the last frost. The blooms are close to the ground, and the ground doesn't provide much heat. That leads to many strawberry growers checking their fields in the middle of the night.

#### PROTECT YOUR CROP

METOS offers a solution with a weather station equipped with wet/dry bulb frost sensor. The wet bulb temperature best represents the temperature of the leaf during frost conditions and it tells you the best time to start the irrigation system. The application allows you to set alerts if the temperature drops below your set threshold so you have time to react, which gives you the reassurance that you will be alerted in time to take action.

#### VOICE OF THE GROWER

We spoke to Easton Sellers, Plum Ridge Farm, in the spring of 2021 he added a METOS/Pessl weather station with frost sensor to monitor the risk of frost in his primary crop, strawberries. Easton said "Since the primary crop on my farm is strawberries, protecting the flower buds from frost in late Spring is critical. Typically, relying on local weather



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### VOICE OF THE GROWER *continued*

data doesn't always give you a clear idea of whether you're going to see frost in your own micro-climate. Having actual data from your own field provides you with the information you need to take effective action. The risk of frost is often highest in the middle of the night, so you can even set your weather station to send you an alert if the temperature drops below your set threshold."

Easton is planning to incorporate a soil probe in the near future in order to monitor soil temperature in the Fall. Strawberry plants enter dormancy when the soil temperature has dropped to a certain level, this will allow Plum Ridge Farms to feel confident about applying straw mulch at the appropriate time when the plants are in a dormant state. Monitoring soil moisture will also help in better understanding of the effects of irrigation and rainfall within the soil and develop a clear irrigation schedule as a result. This becomes increasingly important in extreme weather during harvest when you don't want to over irrigate and cause a reduction in fruit quality, but ensure that plants have access to adequate moisture.

"Overall, I'm looking forward to monitoring my own local field data year to year and developing a broader understanding of the impacts of weather I see on the farm each season." says Easton Sellers. Contact METOS Canada to learn more [metoscanada.ca](http://metoscanada.ca) or 1-800-665-1362.

