

April 4, 2000

**Strawberry Information****NC Strawberry Advisory - Cold Front April 4-5, 2000**

8:45 am, April 4, 2000

Dear Grower,

We have received an E-WEATHER FROST/FREEZE ALERT FOR THE SOUTHEAST (1 pm, 04/03/00) saying much colder weather will move into this region and "could cause" frost in some areas early Wednesday morning (April 5). This report further indicates low temperatures early Wednesday morning near freezing. Winds will be from the northwest diminishing to 4-8 mph after midnight with dew points near freezing.

HOWEVER, strawberry blossoms have a critical temperature of 28 F, and with the kinds of temperatures being forecasted (see table below), IT IS BEST TO GET SOME GOOD SLEEP TONIGHT. I have witnessed examples this spring of growers who attempted to irrigate on high wind nights (like the one being forecast for tonight), and the results were nearly disastrous! Attempting to protect under high wind conditions, even on a night where your actual low only reaches 30 F, can kill a lot of blossoms because of evaporative cooling problems (this recently happened). Because we are not being threatened with temperature minimums below 28 F for early Wednesday morning, I strongly advise against any attempt to protect with irrigation because of the risk of causing INJURY (under the high wind conditions being predicted for tonight and early tomorrow morning- in the range of 8 - 10 mph).

Table 1. Sample of minimum temperatures forecasted for the early Wednesday morning

	5am	6am	7am
Wilmington	>40	>40	>40
Raleigh-Durham	>40	>40	40
Winston-Salem	>35	>35	>35
Asheville	>30	>30	30

Summary: The critical temperature for a strawberry blossom is 28 F. So, for tonight I suggest a strategy of getting some good rest! By doing nothing at all your strawberry crop and customers will thank you!

I will be posting a follow-up advisory at approximately 5:30 pm. A teletip has also been posted this morning:

- a) call 1-800-662-7301
- b) press "1" on touchtone phone
- c) press "5147" to get the strawberry frost update

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