

## The Vegetable Trials - July 2014

Over the past year we have undertaken three main trials with vegetables at Bruce: (a) the function or otherwise of exclusion fabric, (b) potatoes - different varieties planted early and late, and (c) strawberries.

*Exclusion fabric.* We have one bed covered with exclusion fabric and one that is not. We grow exactly the same things in each bed and see what difference we can observe. This year we grew lettuce, corn, tomatoes and beans. They all grew successfully in both beds. However there were some very interesting differences observed. In the case of beans, lettuce and corn, those grown in the exclusion fabric bed were earlier by between 1 and 2 weeks. In working under the fabric, it was noticeable that it was both warmer and more humid than the outside bed. Click on the link to see a [photo of exclusion fabric used to protect a fruit tree.](#)

*Strawberries.* We tried five each of a number of different varieties. They all grew well but two stood out over the year: Everberry and Kamu. Everberry is a Diggers variety available only to members of their club. As its name suggests, it was always with berries. While the crop in spring was minimal, it made visting the garden in summer a pleasure! Kamu is a wonderful strawberry which stood out over the first half of the season. For the average home garden five of each would seem to keep the family in strawberries for the season. We will see how they go over the second season.

*Potatoes.* We grew five seed potatoes of a number of varieties, first planted in September for early potatoes and the second planted in November for a late season crop. [See detailed results.](#) The later tubers were large compared with the early ones - they seemed to grow into each other with some interesting shapes the result. Particularly interesting was the growth habit of Mozart. It spread out a lot more than the others, growing on long roots, while the other varieties grew directly below the plants.