

BLACKBERRIES & RASPBERRIES

(*RUBUS SPP.*)

Apache Blackberry. Highest yield and largest fruit of thornless blackberries.

Arapaho Blackberry. Thornless. Large, aromatic, nearly seedless fruit.

Black Satin Blackberry. Thornless, heat tolerant, semi-erect. Large, juicy fruit.

Navaho Blackberry. Thornless, upright, winter-hardy. Firm, sweet fruit.

Prime-Jim Blackberry. Ever-bearing, fruits on 1st year canes. Medium, firm fruit.

Triple Crown Blackberry. Heat tolerant, easy to pick. Tart-sweet fruit.

Canby Red Raspberry. Thornless, summer crop. Large, sweet fruit.

Fallgold Raspberry. Ever-bearing, upright canes. Yellow gold, extremely sweet fruit.

Heritage Raspberry. Ever-bearing, best fall crop of all raspberries. Firm, juicy, red fruit.

Indian Summer Raspberry. Ever-bearing. Large, red fruit good for canning, freezing, and cooking.

Jewel Black Raspberry. Ever-bearing, fast-growing. Large, sweet, black fruit.

Latham Raspberry. Single crop, cold hardy. Firm, red fruit, great for eating.

Logan Raspberry. June-bearing. Medium, tart, small-seeded, black fruit.

Mammoth Raspberry. Ever-bearing, thorn-less. Large, super-sweet, red fruit.

Raspberry Shortcake Raspberry. Dwarf, thorn-less, rounded bush. Great in containers.

There is nothing quite like fresh, ripe berries. Blackberries and raspberries are classified as brambles, which are any plants in the Rubus genus of the Rose family. Blackberries, both thorny and thornless, and raspberries, black, red, and purple, look similar, but can be distinguished by the core. With blackberries the “core” stays in the fruit when it is picked, and with raspberries it comes out, looking hollow. The canes of red raspberries grow upright, while black raspberry and blackberry canes are long and trailing. Summer raspberries produce a single crop in summer, while ever-bearing (or primo-cane) cultivars produce a second crop in the late summer and early fall. Black raspberries are all single crop plants. Most red raspberry cultivars and blackberries are winter hardy. However, blackberries do well with winter protection for the canes. Raspberries and blackberries are excellent fresh, frozen, or canned or made into jam, jelly, or juice.

Location and soil preparation. Since canes can remain productive for several years, special care must be taken to prepare the soil before planting. Choose a sunny site that is well-drained and amend the soil with plenty of organic matter. Organic matter, like well-rooted manure, Chickity-Doo-Doo, or compost (Nature’s Blend or Cotton Boll) improves air and water movement, favors growth of helpful soil organisms and provides much-needed nutrients. Our native clay soil is heavy and does not drain well; and good drainage is absolutely essential as these deep-rooted berries will die in wet soil.

Pruning. Pruning raspberries is easy (except for the thorns – make sure to wear gloves). The canes grow for the first year, fruit the second and then they are finished, so remove all canes that fruited the previous year. Remove any canes that have grown outside the designated 12-18-inch row footprint and any spindly or short

canes. And always use clean, sharp pruners.

Fertilizing. Fertilize established bushes late summer or fall. Spread the fertilizer evenly, around and between the plants, covering a stripe about 2' wide. Avoid planting in areas where eggplant, potatoes, tomatoes, or strawberries have been grown, as there may be root diseases present that can infect raspberries and blackberries. Winter protection is also important, so plant in areas that are protected from winds to reduce cane breakage and winter injury. Also, avoid low lying areas that may be poorly drained and prone to frost damage.

Staking. Raspberries do not have to be staked; however, staking makes for a neater plant and an easier harvest. The simplest of methods is to tie canes from a simple plant to one stake. Another method is to attach two wires to post at 3- and 5-foot height and tie canes to these supports. Blackberries can be pruned and treated the same as black raspberries.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS.

Red Raspberries. In spring, cut back canes to 4-5 feet and remove weak canes completely.

Black and Purple Raspberries. In early spring, while raspberries are still dormant, cut back lateral (side to side) branches of last year's canes to about a foot. These branches will fruit this season. In early summer, the bushes should be tip-pruned. Tip pruning is exactly what it sounds like – cutting of the tips of the canes to about 24 inches. If the canes are shorter than 24 inches, simply prune off the top inch or so. Tip pruning will encourage lateral branching which will give more fruit the next season.

Ever-bearing varieties. Ever-bearing varieties can be red, black, or purple and can be pruned exactly like other reds or purples. However, since ever-bearing raspberries have two crops instead of one, a simpler pruning method can be used. Cut off all canes 2-3 inches above the ground after dormancy in fall. This method sacrifices the small early harvest; however, a large late harvest can be expected, and this method eliminates many disease problems.



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