

# SKY NURSERY

## RASPBERRIES

The Puget Sound region has an ideal raspberry-growing climate. The cost of fresh raspberries climbs higher each year at the grocery store, due in part to the fragility of the fruit and their special handling requirements. The best way to enjoy an abundance of fresh raspberries is to grow them yourself. They are quite easy to grow in the home garden.

Raspberries like full sun and a **well-drained** soil rich in organic matter. They do not like wet feet, so if your ground is wet, plant the berries on a mound or raised bed about 18 inches above the water table. Before planting, add compost, leaf mold, or well-rotted manure to the soil. Compost or manure can also be used as a mulch to discourage weeds and conserve moisture. Plant your canes about 18" apart in rows 5 feet apart. Plant them one inch deeper than they grew in the nursery. New growth will rise from the roots or from the base of the planted cane.

Raspberries form tall canes, so they do best if tied to wires that are fastened between two stout posts. The upper wire should be 4 to 5 feet above the ground and the lower wire 2 ½ feet from the ground. Tie the canes to the wires securely but not too tightly.

Newly-planted roots should produce 3 to 5 canes the first year. On **summer crop** (one crop per year) varieties these canes will bear fruit the **next** year. On these varieties, once a cane has fruited it will begin to die and can be pruned out. The one-year-old canes that remain can then be thinned out the following winter, removing the weaker canes. Usually at least 7 to 10 canes are left per hill. The canes that are selected to remain can be cut back to head-height.

**Everbearers** normally produce two crops per year—summer and fall. They will produce a fall crop on their first-year canes, then a crop the following summer on the two-year old canes. They therefore need to be pruned differently than the summer crop varieties. Typically the fall crop appears on the top foot or so of the cane; after harvest, remove only the top portion of the cane that has fruited. Next year's summer crop is produced on the remainder of the cane. Once the entire cane has fruited, it will begin to die and should be removed. In the winter, weaker canes can be removed.

Fertilize your raspberries in early spring and again after harvest with a well-balanced fertilizer such as **Dr. Earth** or **E. B. Stone Rose and Flower Food**. Be sure to use a fertilizer formulated to stimulate flowering/fruitletting.

Root rot is the most common problem of raspberries. It is a soil-borne disease and there is no control for it. Infected plants should be destroyed. Future plantings need a new location with well-drained soil. Plant certified, virus-free stock; try to choose varieties that are tolerant of heavy soils. Try planting in raised beds if your soil is heavy.

## SUMMER CROP (ONE CROP) VARIETIES

**BOYNE: Dark-red, tender, and juicy.** Flavor is aromatic and medium-sweet. Good for jams, jellies, and freezing. Ripens early to midseason, hardy and very productive.

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**CANBY:** **Large, firm, juicy berries.** Pleasant flavor; good for freezing, processing, and desserts. Vigorous and productive; developed in Oregon.

**MEEKER:** **Large, thimble-shaped, dark red with good sweet flavor.** Developed at WSU—a standard-setter! Good home variety for eating fresh, freezing, and canning. Not well adapted to heavy soils, but vigorous and productive with a long harvest season. Some resistance to Botrytis.

**TULAMEEN:** **Large, light-red fruit with fine flavor.** New introduction from British Columbia. Extends the raspberry season through July and August—produces for up to 50 days.

**WILLAMETTE:** **Extremely large, nearly round, dark red, firm berry.** Lower sugar content with tart rich flavor. Excellent for fresh eating, canning, and freezing. Holds color and shape well. Plant is vigorous and productive. Requires well-drained soils and mild winters. Disease resistant.

## BLACK (ONE CROP) VARIETIES

**JEWEL BLACK RASPBERRY:** **Large, firm, glossy black berries.** Sweet flavor. Excellent for preserves, freezing, or fresh eating. Good yields on vigorous upright plants. Midseason.

**MUNGER BLACK RASPBERRY:** **Large, firm, shiny black berries.** Delicious sweet flavor is excellent in jams, jellies, and preserves, or for fresh eating. Excellent yields. Good resistance to fungal diseases. Midseason. A unique flavor!

## EVERBEARING (TWO CROP) VARIETIES

**CAROLINE:** **Large medium red berry.** Strong, rich, full flavor. Very productive—ripens until frost. Resistant to grey mold, very vigorous.

**FALL GOLD:** **Golden everbearing, with medium, soft, very sweet berries.** Excellent for eating fresh and processing. Ripens in July; second crop ripens from late August to frost. Hardy.

**HERITAGE:** **Medium sized fruit ripens in July and September.** Erect canes are vigorous, need little support.