Growing Berries and Grapes in Home Gardens

University of Idaho
Cooperative Extension System
Prepared by Dr. D.L. Barney
March 2010

Matching crops to your site
Success with berries and grapes starts with selecting crops that are well adapted to your growing region.
Step two is to prepare your site to best meet your crops’ special needs.

Raspberries
Well adapted to many Inland Northwest areas.
Plants mature in about 3 years and bear 2 to 4 pounds of berries per hill.
There are four types of raspberries:
- black, purple.
- red, yellow.

Raspberry requirements
Soil pH values of 5.5 to 7.0 are best.
Soils must be well drained. Plant in raised beds.
Plant in full sun in areas with good air movement.

Black raspberries
Popular in the northeastern U.S.
Hardy to -5 to -10°F.
Perform best in USDA zones 6-7.
Berries are smaller and seedier than red raspberries, and are used mostly for processing.
**Purple raspberries**

Hybrids between black & red raspberries. Vigorous and high yielding.

Hardy to -20° to -25°F. Perform best in USDA zones 5-7.

Fair for fresh use, excellent for processing.

‘Royalty’ can be used at red or purple stages.

**Black & purple raspberries for the Inland Northwest**

Black
- Haut
- Jewell
- Munger

Purple
- Brandywine
- Royalty

Photos courtesy of USDA

**Red and yellow raspberries**

Both are the same species.

Cold Hardy to -20° to -30°F. Perform best in USDA zones 5-7.

Most widely adapted raspberries for the Inland NW.

Summer- and fall-bearing (everbearing) cultivars are available.

**Red raspberries are used fresh, frozen, and for processing.**

Yellow raspberries are best used fresh, as they are high in sugar but lack acids. Processed yellow raspberries often have poor color and flavor.

**Summer bearing red raspberries for the Inland Northwest**

Algonquin
- Canby
- Chilcotin
- Festival
- Haida
- Killarney
- Latham
- Newburgh

Nootka
- Nordic
- Reveille
- Skeena
- Souris
- Taylor
- Tulameen
**Fall-bearing red raspberries for the Inland Northwest**

- Amity
- Autumn Bliss
- Heritage
- Redwing
- Summit

Fall-bearing raspberries are grown in beds about 18" wide, with the canes held in by twine or wire.

**Yellow raspberries for the Inland Northwest**

**Summer-Bearing**
- Golden West

**Fall-Bearing**
- Amber
- Fall Gold

Photo courtesy of USDA

**Blackberries**

Best suited to the warmest areas of the Inland Northwest.

Plants mature in about 3 years.

Yield: 6 to 7 pounds per plant.

There are two types of blackberries:
- Trailing.
- Erect and semi-erect.

**Blackberry requirements**

Soil pH values of 5.5 to 7.0 are best.

Soils should be well-drained.

Plant in full sun in areas with good air movement.

**Trailing blackberries**

Include Marion, Logan, Youngberries, tayberries, tummelberries, bababerries.

Often injured at 0°F to +5°F.

Given extra care, they can be grown with risk of injury in zone 7 (Boise and Lewiston areas).

Not well suited for other Inland Northwest regions.
**Erect blackberries**

Hardest cultivars survive -20°F.
Thorny and thornless cultivars are available.
Adapted to zones 6 and 7. They are marginal in Zone 5 and can be difficult to ripen in short-season areas.
The most cold hardy cultivars include:
- Illini Hardy & Darrow (thorny, most hardy).
- Chester and Dirksen (thornless).

**Strawberries**

Well adapted to all Inland Northwest locations.
Plants bear fruit during the planting year or the year after planting.
Strawberries should be replanted at least every 3 to 4 years.

Strawberries grow well in fields, raised beds, & containers. They can be grown indoors in hanging baskets.
There are three types of strawberries:
- June-bearing.
- Everbearing.
- Dayneutral.

**Strawberry requirements**

Soil pH of 5.5 to 7.0 is best.
Soils must be well drained. Best grown in raised beds or containers.
Strawberries do not tolerate drought.
Plant in full sun.
Keep rows no more than 18 inches wide.
**June-bearing strawberries**

Bear one heavy crop over about 3 weeks during late spring and early summer.
Different cultivars ripen at different times.
Bear fruit during the second and third years.
Produce ½ to 1 pound of berries per foot of row.

**Everbearing strawberries**

Bear two light crops during late spring and late summer with a trickle of berries in between.
Bear fruit during the second and third seasons.
Produce ¼ to ¾ pounds of berries per foot of row.

**Dayneutral strawberries**

Bear similarly to everbearing strawberries, but yields are higher.
Can produce some fruit during the planting year. Heaviest crops are produced during the second and third years.
Yield ½ to 1 ½ pounds per foot of row during the second and third years.
Well suited to high-intensity plantings.

**June-bearing strawberries**

1. Earliglo
2. Lester
3. Honeoye
4. Catakill
5. Surecrop
6. Cavendish
7. Redchief
8. Scott
9. Alistar
10. Guardian
11. Lateglow
12. Totem
13. Glooscap
14. Micmac
15. Benton
16. Jewell
17. Blomidon
18. Shuksan

**Day-neutral & everbearing strawberries**

**Red and white currants**

Well adapted to many Northwest regions.
Mature in 3-4 years.
Yield 5 to 8 pounds per bush. Used for jellies, syrups, juices, relishes, and garnishes. Generally resistant to white pine blister rust.
**Black currants**

Suited to many Northwest areas. Several cultivars are resistant to white pine blister rust.

Mature in 3-4 years and yield 5 pounds per bush.

The berries are high in vitamin C and are used for jellies, syrups, & juices. The buds, leaves, and berries are used in herbal medicines and teas.

**Currant requirements**

Currants are very cold hardy (-30°F to -40°F) and can be grown throughout the Northwest. Cool, moist sites are best.

Sensitive to heat and drought.

Tolerate heavy soils.

Optimum soil pH 5.5 to 6.8.

**Cordon-trained red currants**

Photo courtesy of Steve McKay

**Gooseberry varieties**

Captivator*

Jahn’s Prairie*

Jeanne*

Josselyn*

Pixwell*

Poorman*

* Blister rust and powdery mildew resistant

**Gooseberries**

Well adapted to many Northwest locations.

Mature in 4 to 5 years and yield 5 pounds per plant.

Site requirements are similar to those for currants, but gooseberries tolerate higher temperatures.

Excellent for fresh use or pastries.

For cold areas, gooseberries make good substitutes for grapes.
**Blueberries**

Well adapted to many areas in the Inland Northwest.

Given appropriate soils, blueberries are among the easiest fruits to grow.

Excellent in edible landscapes, with red fall foliage.

There are three types of blueberries suited to the Inland Northwest:
- **Northern highbush** – yield 8 to 20 pounds per bush.
- **Lowbush** – yield 1 pound per bush.
- **Half-high** – yield 1 to 3 pounds per bush.

Southern highbush and rabbiteye blueberries are not reliably cold hardy for most Inland Northwest locations.

**Blueberry requirements**

Many cultivars are hardy to –25° to –33°F.

Require acid soils with a pH of 4.2 to 5.2.

Moist, well-drained soil. Plant in full sun.

Best grown in raised beds. Half-high and lowbush varieties do well in large containers.

Respond well to organic mulch.

**Highbush blueberries tested at the University of Idaho**

(in order of ripening)

1. Earliblue
2. Bluetta
3. Duke
4. Spartan
5. Patriot
6. Bluery
7. Meader
8. Toro
9. Hardyblue (1613A)
10. Bluecrop
11. Jersey
12. Elliott

**Highbush blueberries worthy of Inland Northwest trials**

(in order of ripening)

1. Hannah's Choice
2. Reka
3. Sierra
4. Cara's Choice
5. Little Giant
6. Toro
7. Bluegold
8. Draper
9. Brigitta
10. Legacy
11. Nelson
12. Liberty
**Half-high blueberries**

tested at the University of Idaho or worthy of Inland Northwest trials (in order of ripening)

1. Northland  
2. Northcountry  
3. Northsky  
4. Northblue  
5. Chippewa  
6. Friendship  
7. Polaris  
8. St. Cloud

**Lingonberries**

Probably developed from a natural cross between blueberries and cranberries. Resemble cranberries in appearance and flavor, and are used for relishes.

Similar to blueberries and huckleberries in site requirements.

Well suited to containers and landscape beds.

**Grapes**

The most widely grown crop in the world. Grapes are used fresh & for pastries, jellies, juices, & wines.

Adapted to warmer regions in the Inland Northwest. Perform best in zones 6 and 7. Marginal in zone 5. Can be very difficult to ripen in cooler, short-season areas.

**Grape requirements**

Adaptable to a wide range of soil types and pH values.

Perform best on well-drained soils.

Plant in full sun.

In cooler, short-season areas, plant against a south-facing wall.

**European grapes**

Hardy from –5 to +10°F.

Grown commercially in southwestern Idaho, south-central Washington, and along the coast.

Some seedless table grape and raisin cultivars are available. Most European grapes are used for wine.
American grapes

Some cultivars are hardy to -25°F.

Best choice of grapes for most Inland Northwest gardeners. Can be grown easily in zones 6 and 7, and with marginal success in warmer zone 5 locations.

As with other types, can be difficult to ripen fruit in short-season areas.

Used fresh and for pastries, jellies, & juices.

Hybrid grapes

Hardy from -15°F to -25°F.

Good grape choices for zones 6 and 7.

A few cultivars can be grown in zone 5, with some difficulty.

Used mostly for wines and juices.

Grapes for the Inland Northwest

Seeded

- Aurore**
- Campbell’s Early*
- Catawba
- Chancellor
- Concord*
- Castel
- DeChaunac
- Delaware
- Marechal Foch* **
- Niagara
- Rosette*

Seedless

- Canadice**
- Concord Seedless
- Reliance**

* Most cold hardy
** Early ripening

Saskatoons

*Amelanchier* species native to the Northwest are known by many names, including serviceberry, shadbush, and Juneberry.

Resemble blueberries in appearance & flavor. Grow 6 to 30 feet tall with showy white flowers.

Good for wildlife plantings and naturalized landscapes.

They are grown commercially in Canada.

Saskatoon requirements

Cold hardy to near -60°F.

Plant in full sun. Bloom early and the flowers are susceptible to frost. Avoid frost pockets.

Adapted to a wide range of soil types and pH values.

Saskatoons do not compete well with quackgrass, Canada thistles, and other perennial weeds. Protect from deer browse damage.
Saskatoons
Cultivars recommended for fruit production

Northline
Pembina
Smokey
Thiessen

Photo courtesy of Oregon State University

University of Idaho Fruit Publications
Available from your county extension office or
Agricultural Publications
University of Idaho, Moscow, ID 83844-2240
208-885-4548
– http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/edComm/catalog.asp

Backyard Grapes – CIS 790
Growing Apples for Local markets in Cold Climates – Bul 820
Growing Blueberries in the Inland Northwest & Intermountain West – BUL 815

Growing Currants, Gooseberries, & Jostabberries in the Inland Northwest and Intermountain West – BUL 855
Growing Raspberries & Blackberries in the Inland Northwest & Intermountain West – BUL 812
Growing Saskatoons in the Inland Northwest and Intermountain West - BUL 866

Growing Strawberries in the Inland Northwest & Intermountain West – BUL 810
Growing Western Huckleberries – BUL 821
Selecting Grapes varieties and Planting Sites in Idaho – CIS 1043
Training & Pruning Your Home Orchard – PNW 400

Websites that provide information and publications on the production of fruits, vegetables, herbs, field crops, and livestock:

University of Idaho, Sandpoint R&E Center
http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/sandpoint/

Idaho Landscapes and Gardens
http://extension.uidaho.edu/idahogardens/

Oregon State University
http://extension.oregonstate.edu/index.php

Washington State University
http://extension.wsu.edu/agriculture/plants/Pages/default.aspx

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas
www.attra.org

Northwest Berry and Grape Information Network
http://berrygrape.orst.edu
Thank you for participating in our Berries and Grapes class.

Happy fruit growing!