



Blueberry Growing Information

Cultural Requirements

Blueberries prefer an acidic, well drained soil. Amending soil with peat moss will help lower the pH as well as improve soil aeration and moisture retention. Their shallow, compact root system makes regular irrigation a necessity. Mulching with acidic materials has proved beneficial on soils which are not ideal for blueberry growing. Bark dust applied to a depth of two to four inches is a good mulch for blueberries due to its ability to lower the pH in the growing area. Due to their shallow roots make sure adequate moisture is available and additional mulch is beneficial during winter months.

Blueberries will produce the best when planted in full sun.

Fertilization

With the alkaline soil properties in much of our area, we recommend applying a soil acidifier, such as Down To Earth Acid Mix, when planting your blueberries.

Fruit production

Although blueberry plants are self-fertile, cross-pollination with another variety that has an overlapping blooming period will produce more abundant and larger fruit. Two different varieties must be planted to ensure cross pollination for plentiful fruit set. The early varieties begin ripening in June, and the late varieties in early August. Choose at least two plants with overlapping bloom period for successful cross-pollination. For example, an early-season variety could cross-pollinate another early-season or a mid-season variety. An early-season variety paired with a late season variety would both still produce fruit, but without an overlapping bloom period, yields and size of berries might not be as large.

Pruning

Pruning is best done in late winter or early spring. Remove any dead or damaged branches as well as weak, low-growing branches. Some of the thrifty vegetative wood may be removed to prevent the plant from becoming too sprawling or too high.

Harvesting

Blueberries become sweeter as they hang on the bush. The only possible reason to pick early, (as they turn blue) is to escape predatory birds. Home gardeners often protect their plants from birds with nets. A large plant may have 15 to 20 pounds of fruit and is worth protecting.