

Growing Brambles

These North American natives are easy to grow in your yard or garden, if a few simple rules are followed:

- ☼ **Choosing a location:** Brambles prefer full sunlight for best fruit production, but will grow in 50% shade. Choose a location where you have not grown potatoes, tomatoes or eggplant. These plants are hosts to verticillium wilt that may live for many years in your soil and affect brambles.
- ☼ **To Plant:** Once a location is chosen, dig a hole twice as wide and the same depth as your root ball. Gently loosen the roots and place in the hole. Combine the existing soil with compost and topsoil and fill the hole so that settled soil will leave the plant at the same level at which it was in the pot.
- ☼ **Watering:** Water plants immediately after planting and through dry periods. It is a good idea to lay a soaker hose or dripline along the plants before mulching.
- ☼ **Fertilizing: Do not over feed.** This will lead to lots of foliage but less fruit.. Use a neutral formula such as 10-10-10.
- ☼ **Pruning:** Pruning is key to productivity. Our plants require no initial pruning and will fruit during the first season from existing canes produced during the previous growing season. After fruiting is completed, prune the old cane off as low as possible and discard. These canes must be burned or disposed of since they may become disease hosts. By removing old canes your plant will constantly be stimulated to produce newer, more productive wood that will produce your fruit.
- ☼ **Mulch:** Heavy use of mulch will retard weed competition, aid in moisture retention and add humus to your site.
- ☼ **Trellis:** A simple trellis will help to restrain plants and make picking simple.

Edible Landscaping

Edible landscaping, simply put, replaces plants that are strictly ornamental with plants that produce food, allowing you to create a multi-functional landscape providing returns (fruits, berries, etc.) on your investment of water, fertilizer, and time. Here are some additional benefits:

- **Improved Taste and Nutrition:** Nutrients and flavor in most plants are highest immediately after harvest. This is particularly true of raspberries & blackberries. They are a gourmet treat available only to growers since the fruit is highly perishable and is best eaten fresh off the bush. The holding and handling period of market blackberries and raspberries is long enough that fruit loses its finest flavor and may be bruised.
- **Increased Food Security:** An edible landscape reduces your dependence on foreign food sources which have unknown production systems
- **Reduced Food Costs:** Certain foods are more economical to grow at home than to purchase.
- **Convenience:** Having fruits right outside the door will encourage you to add fresher, healthier foods to your diet.
- **Fun and Exercise:** Growing your own crops is rewarding and fun! The exercise you get in the process can help you stay fit.
- **Sustainability:** Consuming locally grown produce can be an important part of reducing energy inputs and protecting our environment..



Blackberries
&
Raspberries

Virginia Berry Farm

www.virginiaberryfarm.com

Raspberries

All of our Raspberries are self-pollinating, so in limited space it is possible to have only one plant. Most grow somewhat upright and can be grown without trellising at 3 to 5 foot centers. All but Jewel are thornless. Hardy in zones 4-7.

Our Raspberry offerings:

Red Raspberries:

- **Boyne** bears medium-sized fruit in summer. They are aromatic & sweet—good for processing & freezing.
- **Caroline** is an everbearing variety producing large berries with a super-strong raspberry flavor beginning two weeks earlier than Heritage.
- **Killarney** is an early-season variety with beautiful foliage and a distinctive leaf shape—the best bramble from a landscape point-of-view. Medium to large fruit is a light honey-red with an excellent flavor.
- **Latham** produces large fruit in late spring. The fruit ripens over an extended period and its large berries hold a rich color and flavor when preserved.
- **Heritage** is everbearing (small spring crop, larger fall crop). The fruit is of high quality, firm and of excellent flavor.

Colorful Raspberries:

- **Jewel** is a unique mid-season, black raspberry. It produces an excellent yield of large glossy, flavorful berries. A thorned variety.
- **Kiwigold and Anne** are everbearing like Heritage but produce golden yellow berries.
- **Royalty** is a purple variety producing large quantities of big, sweet, dark red to purple fruit late in the season

Groundcover Raspberry:

- **Formosa Carpet** is a unique, spreading, evergreen groundcover that does well in a shady setting. Although its amber-colored fruit has a good flavor, this offering is known as an excellent, low-maintenance groundcover for both urban and rural settings.

Blackberries

Blackberries will soon be prolific growers, if not properly pruned. Each spring canes should be mowed or cut to 6 inches and then they should be topped during the season. Several inches of mulch will discourage suckering.

Our Blackberry offerings:

- **Apache** boasts large, tasty fruit with good eating and keeping characteristics. It is an upright plant, growing 4 to 5 feet in height. A good pollinator for other varieties.
- **Arapaho** requires no pollinator, being self-fertile. It has large, glossy, conical-shaped fruit that are quite firm. This early-season variety ripens about eleven days earlier than Navaho.
- **Chester** is very cold-hardy, but also grows well in the south. This self-fertile, late-season variety produces large, high-quality berries that are firm and keep well.
- **Kiowa** is an early to mid-season, upright, thorny variety that bears incredibly large fruit—larger than a quarter! It provides delicious berries over a long period of harvest.
- **Navaho** is an upright variety with showy, white, star-shaped, fragrant flowers on 6-8 canes. Prune canes at shoulder height twice during the growing season. Large, glossy berries, borne over a six-week period in mid-season, are excellent for freezing and preserving. Self-fertile.
- **Triple Crown** is an early-season variety with outstanding fruit production of up to 30 pounds per plant. This coupled with its outstanding vigor and cold hardiness make it extremely popular with home growers. The fruit is large and glossy with an excellent flavor. This self-fertile plant is a trailing variety, so it should be trellised.



Anti-oxidants and Health

When it comes to nutrition, no one can beat Mother Nature. The health-giving qualities of blackberries and raspberries have been legendary since the time of ancient Greece. Consider what research has shown us about the important health benefits of a small raspberry or blackberry.

These berries abound in antioxidants that may impart significant health benefits. Among these antioxidants are the phytochemicals anthocyanin and ellagic acid, and vitamins C and E. Cooking does not seem to destroy ellagic acid, so even jams and desserts retain their health benefits.

After producing the largest ranking of antioxidant foods to date, a collaboration of Norwegian and US scientists have determined that in terms of the highest antioxidant content per serving, blackberries top the list. They are also a natural source of salicylate, an active substance found in aspirin.

Raspberries are an especially excellent source of two critical antioxidant nutrients: magnesium (62% Daily Value) and vitamin C (51.3% DV), as well as dietary fiber (33.4% DV).

So why not just take a nutritional supplement? Research has shown that it is the combination of phytochemicals working together with berry fiber, vitamins, and minerals which make it so wholly effective. Besides who wants to miss out on all that great berry flavor. Here's to your health!