



GROWING RASPBERRIES

The plants are perennial. Summer-bearing varieties produce fruit on canes that appeared the previous year as vegetative shoots. Fall-bearing varieties fruit on current-season growth.

SITE Sunny and sheltered. Must be well-drained with no chance of waterlogging or flooding, as on a slope or in raised rows. Preferably where no raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, peppers or tomatoes were grown in the previous 4-5 years.

SOIL Best in loam or sandy loam 60-120 cm (2-4') deep, with a pH of 5.8—6.5.

PREPARATION : Lime should be incorporated in our coastal soils, preferably the year before and to a depth of 15-30 cm (1-2'). Dolomite lime offers magnesium as well as calcium; because of winter rain and summer watering both are leached out. Thereafter it should be applied every 3-4 years. At least a week before planting, well-rotted manure or compost should be incorporated.

PLANTING : While the plants are still dormant in February or March and with certified disease-free stock. During planting roots must never be allowed to dry out. The crowns should be set at the same depth as in the nursery.

SPACING : About 45-60 cm (18"-2') apart in rows spaces at 2 m (6') or more.

SUPPORT : Posts set 3 m (10') apart with wire strung at heights of 75 cm (30"), 1.1 m (3.5') and 1.5 m (5') on either side of the row. More wires may be criss-crossed between them to pre-vent in-row lodging.

WATERING : Raspberries must never be allowed to dry out. They are shallow-rooted and therefore at risk during periods of drought. Trickle irrigation works well but be aware that over-watering leaches away nutrients and promotes root rot.

WEEDING : Hand weeding, because most of the shallow root system is contained in the top 30 cm (1') of soil.

MULCHING : A mulch of 10-15 cm (4-6") laid down one year after planting will help con-serve moisture and control weeds.

FERTILIZER : Soil analysis should be conducted the year before planting to determine re-quirements, but otherwise well-rotted manure or compost may be incorporated every spring.

If commercial fertilizers are used they are applied in bands 30 cm (1') away from the row and 10 cm (4") below the soil surface on both sides of the row, early in April and again in early June. Excess nitrogen can promote sappy growth and soft fruit.

POLLINATION : Raspberries are self-pollinated but need insects to transfer pollen to the pistils, so the use of insecticides should be avoided during bloom.

PRUNING : Summer fruiting varieties - Old canes that have borne fruit should be cut right back to the ground after September or October. The new vegetative canes may be thinned to about 3-4 per plant after leaves have fallen. In late February of the following year while they are still dormant they may be topped back to 1.5 m (5'). The row is kept about 35 cm (14") wide.

Fall fruiting varieties - All canes are cut back to the ground in winter. When new ones appear in the spring they may be thinned to about 3-4 per plant. Early fruiting is encouraged by pinching out growing tips from the canes at about 1 m (40").

VARIETIES : Summer fruiting

Tulameen - most widely grown in the world, fresh eating (F)

Malahat - early, F, processing (P), individual quick freezing (IQF), very susceptible to root rot, RBD virus

Chemainus - mid season, F, P, IQF

Esquimalt - late, F, IQF

Cowichan - F, moderately susceptible to root rot and RBD virus

Saanich - F,P, spineless

Fall fruiting

Heritage - from September to first frost

Amity - early, some resistance to root and fruit rot

Anne - yellow fruited

PESTS AND DISEASES : Root rot - a problem on heavy wet soils, canes suddenly wilt and die

Spur blight - brown wedge shaped spots with yellow edges on leaves of new canes, weakens plants

Cane wilt - first appears as brown blotches on new green canes

Crown gall - woody swellings at base of plant

RBD virus - weakens plants and sometimes produces crumbly fruit

Fruit rot - blossoms also turn brown and die

Crown borer - girdles new canes and causes galls at base

Weevils - feed on unopened buds

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