



UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO  
*College of Agriculture*

# RASPBERRY GROWING in Idaho



By  
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# Raspberry Growing in Idaho

By Anton S. Horn\*

This bulletin is meant to help people who wish to grow raspberries either in the home garden or in small commercial plantings. Raspberries do best where summer weather is cool. Even though the climate is not ideal in much of Idaho, the fruit is grown in almost every county. The berries are raised for home use and local market.

## Select Healthy Plants

When selecting plants make sure they are true to variety and come from disease-free stock. Raspberries suffer from virus diseases such as mosaic and leafcurl. These diseases are inside the plants and cannot be controlled by spraying. You can avoid them by buying healthy plants. If these diseases do show up later, dig out and burn the diseased plants.

## Choose Good Varieties

### Red Raspberries

The red raspberries have erect canes and are propagated by suckers that grow from the roots of the parent plant. Most growers will likely be best satisfied with the performance of the red varieties. Some of the best sorts for Idaho are described as follows:

**CHIEF** — is an early-ripening variety. The fruit is small, medium red and of fair quality. It's probably the hardiest of the good red raspberries for our colder sections.

**LATHAM** — is the hardy red variety planted by most growers in Idaho. It ripens midseason, is highly productive and the berries are large. The quality is not high and the berries are often crumbly. It is tolerant of mosaic if not planted close to black raspberries. It is considered more reliable in eastern Idaho than any other variety.

**CANBY** — is very hardy. Its berries are large, light bright red, and firm. It is a high yielder and a good freezing berry. It ripens midseason and is replacing the older variety Latham in many sections. Not adapted to heavy soils.

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NEWBURGH — has large, bright red, firm berries of good quality. It is hardy and late maturing.

WASHINGTON — is a late variety with berries medium to large, deep red of high quality. It ripens later than Canby. It resists mosaic. It is not as hardy as Latham. It is good for freezing, canning and preserving.

FAIRVIEW — (For trial). Fairview is a new variety released by Oregon State University and the USDA in 1961. The berries are medium large, bright medium red, firm. It makes a good frozen product. It is not suitable for canning. It ripens with Canby and Willamette. It is somewhat tolerant of heavy soils.

SUMNER — hasn't been grown extensively in Idaho. The berries are large, medium red, bright, sweet and firm. It has good quality fresh and may be used for both canning and freezing. It ripens with Washington, and is listed as very hardy. This variety is tolerant of heavy soils.

WILLAMETTE — is a very large dark red berry nearly round, firm and of good quality. It is a good canner, but only fair as a freezer. It ripens with Canby.

Other varieties that may be used include Puyallup, Taylor, Milton and Cuthbert.

## Yellow Raspberries

It is possible to buy yellow raspberries that have all the characteristics of red raspberries except the color. These are seldom grown.

## Everbearing Red Varieties

The summer crop is borne on the old canes and the fall crop on new canes. The first crop is light and the heavy crop matures in late summer. If canes are winter damaged there is a poor spring crop. Some prefer to cut all canes to the ground each spring and depend only on the fall crop that ripens over a long period but may be cut short by an early frost.

DURHAM — This variety ripens its fall crop the earliest of any of the everbearing raspberries. The fruit, although large and attractive, has only fair quality.

INDIAN SUMMER — is a high quality berry. The fruit is large and conical. Some stocks of this variety have a tendency to crumble. It is a

good yielder and fairly hardy. The fall crop is late and in areas of shorter seasons often killed by frost. In these areas, it should be grown for its good summer crop only.

SEPTEMBER — September's fall crop ripens three to four weeks earlier than the fall crop of Indian Summer. The fall fruits of September are firmer and brighter in color than Indian Summer and of equal quality. The berries are of medium size, very firm, bright red and of fair quality in the summer. September has not shown a tendency to crumble. Flavor is much better in the fall. The berries stick to the plant and are difficult to pick until they are fully ripe. Summer crop is earlier and larger than Latham.

September is pruned like the one-crop varieties. The tips that bear the autumn crop do not fruit again the following year and are removed at the dormant pruning. The summer crop is borne lower on the cane in the usual manner. The summer crop ripens a week earlier than Newburgh and a day or two earlier than Indian Summer.

RANERE (St. Regis) — This old variety has fruit that is small to medium size, dark red, and soft. It is of good quality and very early.

## Purple Raspberries

Purple raspberries are hybrids of red and black. Their canes are like those of the black raspberries and are propagated by tip layering. The fruits of the purple varieties resemble the red more than the black. It is a good fruit fresh and for freezing. The black and purple raspberries suffer more from virus diseases than the red so keep the red varieties at least 300 feet away.

SODUS — This variety is late in ripening, but produces very large purple berries that are firm, but tart. The plants are hardy. They are very productive and vigorous.

MARION — This variety has berries larger and later-ripening than Sodus. They ripen 7 to 10 days after Latham. They are classed moderately firm, slightly conic and tart. The plants are vigorous, hardy and productive.

## Black Raspberries (Blackcaps)

Black raspberries have arched canes that root at the tips. They are propagated by tip layers. They are generally not successful commercially,

because they are highly susceptible to virus diseases, and because they are not as hardy as the reds.

**BLACK PEARL (Pearl)** — is an early ripening variety that has a short season. Its berries are large and firm.

**LOGAN** — Also called New Logan, has berries medium to large, firm, bright and attractive. The plants are vigorous and yield well. It ripens a week earlier than Cumberland.

**BRISTOL** — A newer variety with berries large, glossy, firm, attractive and of good flavor. They are hard to pick unless they are fully mature. They are hard to pick after a rain. Plants are vigorous, hardy, productive and tall.

**CUMBERLAND** — An old established variety. Its season is late and it produces attractive, glossy, large, firm berries of good quality. It produces only good yields, but not exceptional yields.

**MORRISON** — A late variety. Its berries are large, firm, glossy, and of fair quality. Plants are vigorous, but not as productive as earlier varieties.

**BLACK HAWK** — is a very late variety introduced from Iowa. It has large, firm, glossy berries of good flavor. The plants are vigorous, productive and very hardy.

**MUNGER** — A midseason variety preferred to all other black varieties in Oregon and Washington. It is superior in yield, fruit quality and plant characteristics.

## Plant in Good Soil

Raspberries do best in deep well-drained sandy loam soil. They do not thrive in heavy clay especially where there is a high water table. The subsoil should be deep and well-drained and not underlaid by a shallow pan or water table. Raspberries suffer from lime-induced iron chlorosis on soils high in lime. In good soil a planting may last 10 years or more. In our colder areas raspberries on hillsides suffer less damage from winter injury than those planted in valleys. Plant on a site protected from drying winter winds and avoid the daytime warmth of a south slope.

## Plant in Spring

This is more reliable in most parts of Idaho than fall planting. You can plant as soon as the

ground can be worked and danger of severe freezing weather is past. Set plants promptly. Don't let the roots get dry. If you can't plant immediately heel them in. In transplanting dig plants to leave as many feeder roots as possible rather than pulling them.

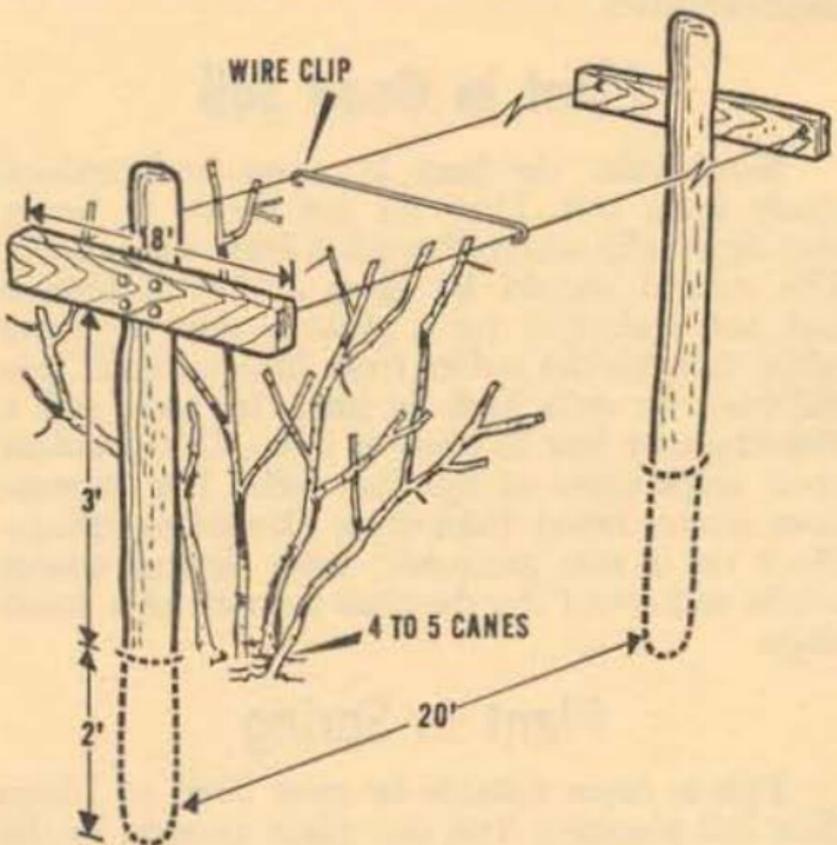
## Select a Training System

**HEDGE ROW SYSTEM.** This is most common in home plantings. The plants are set two to four feet apart in rows seven to ten feet apart. The sucker plants are allowed to grow between the original plants in the row, forming a hedge row 12 to 15 inches wide. The space between rows depends on the width required for power and tillage implements.

**LINEAL SYSTEM.** In the linear system plants are spaced the same as in the hedge row system. All sucker plants appearing anywhere except in or close to the original plant crown are removed by cultivating and hoeing.

## Build a Trellis

To support raspberry plants, set posts 16 to 25 feet apart in a row. Staple a wire to each side of each post at a height about 18 inches below where the canes are to be headed back. The canes are kept between the wires. If desired, the wires can be fastened to 12 or 15 inch cross-arms nailed to the post to give more room for



the canes. Additional wires can be added above or below if needed. A common practice is to fasten a single wire to the tops of the posts and tie the canes to this.

## **Prune for Heaviest Production**

Remove all old canes (those that have borne fruit) anytime between the end of harvest and early the next spring. Raspberry canes are biennial, they grow the first year, fruit the second, then die. In the warmer parts of the state the old canes are removed immediately after harvest, but in the colder sections they are left to help hold up the snow and prevent damage to the new canes.

Cut out all weak new canes (those that are spindly and generally less than 30 inches high).

Thin out the remaining stronger new canes, saving only the best, so they average 3 or 4 canes per foot of hedge row system, or so there are not over 8 to 10 canes per hill if the linear system is used. Where vigorous growth is made, more canes should be left than where the growth is relatively poor.

Cut back the tip of the canes left for the new season's crop. Do not cut off more than 1/4 the length of the cane.

Black and purple raspberries differ from reds in pruning as follows: In early summer when the new shoots are 2½ to 3 feet high, remove 5 inches of the end of each cane. This forces more growth into the side branches. The following spring the weaker side branches are cut back to 6 or 10 inches and the stronger ones to 10 or 15 inches.

## **Keep Weeds Down**

Cultivate as often as necessary to keep weeds under control. Each cultivation should be followed by hoeing in the row. Cultivation must be shallow to avoid root injury — not over 2 to 3 inches deep. Do not cultivate during the harvest season. It may injure or soil the berries.

## **Use a Cover Crop**

Cover crops are very beneficial in raspberry planting. They keep up organic matter in the soil. They reduce soil erosion and winter injury. A combination of winter vetch 40 lb. and rye 60 lb. per acre is recommended. Many others, such as oats and Austrian field peas, can be used. Sow as soon as fall moisture is available in dry-land

areas, or shortly after harvest if you irrigate. Under irrigation turn the cover crop under when the grain begins to head; earlier in dry-land areas.

## Fertilize in Spring

Raspberries generally benefit from an annual application of nitrogen. If good growth and yields are not being obtained, your trouble may be due to other causes than lack of fertility. Fertilizers cannot be expected to give their best results if the plants are diseased or infested with insects, if the soil lacks humus or sufficient moisture, or is poorly drained, or if the plants have not been pruned or cultivated properly. Barnyard manure used at a rate of 10 to 12 tons per acre is excellent. If used together with a cover crop, apply the manure in the spring just before the cover crop is turned under. Otherwise, manure may be applied any time between late fall and early spring. Or you may use 200 to 250 lbs per acre of ammonium sulphate or the nitrogen equivalent of another fertilizer. If a cover crop is grown, 150 to 200 lbs per acre of treble superphosphate should be beneficial in areas where alfalfa and other field crops are improved by phosphate. Apply commercial fertilizer in the spring just before growth starts. Spread it between the rows, not over the plants.

## Irrigate for Best Yields

Frequency of irrigation will vary with conditions, and must be determined by the needs of the plants. Ordinarily, every 2 to 3 weeks is often enough before harvest, and about once a week during harvest. After harvest every 2 to 3 weeks will do.

## After Harvest

Neglect after harvest is one of the most common causes of low yields. The ability of a raspberry plant to produce the next year depends a great deal on the care it received *after* the last crop was picked. Be sure to control insect pests, especially mites, during this period. Don't let the plants suffer for lack of irrigation.

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