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Raspberry Culture

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Extension Extra

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Horticulture

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY / U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Raspberry Culture

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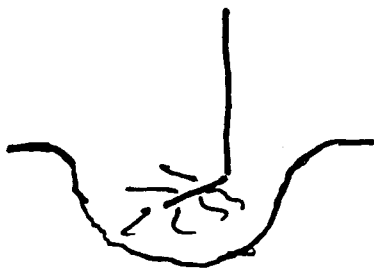
Planting

Plant in early spring in a weed free strip that is 3-4' wide in a well drained soil. To ensure a weed free soil, begin soil preparation the year before planting, using cultivation, cover crops, or herbicides to eliminate weed problems. Soil pH of 5.5 to 6.5 with 3% organic matter is optimal for raspberries.

Plant quality disease-free plants of winter-hardy cultivars. Raspberries are susceptible to *Verticillium* wilt and should not be planted where raspberries, strawberries, tomatoes, potatoes, or eggplant have grown in the last 4-5 years. Plant in protected site, cane injury and desiccation due to wind is a major problem for raspberries.

Red, purple and black raspberries are adaptable to growing in a hedgerow or in hills. For development of hedge rows (solid row of plants), plant red raspberries 2-3' apart, black raspberries 3-4' apart and purple raspberries 3-5' apart in a straight row. (Adjust spacing between rows to accommodate cultivation equipment.) The plants also can be maintained in hills spaced 4-6' apart. Black and purple raspberries are more easily maintained in separate hills since they do not sucker like the red raspberry.

Set red raspberries at the same depth that they were in the nursery, spreading the roots laterally. Trim the stem off at a height of 6". Place dormant black and purple transplants so that the tips of the crown are about 2 1/2" below the soil surface, with roots spread laterally and down. Tamp soil



carefully to avoid damaging bud. Cut the handle of the transplant off at ground level. Water after planting, raspberries need 1 1/2 to 2" of rainfall a week in the growing season.

Fertilizing

Good drainage is critical for brambles; they are prone to root rots on poorly drained soils. Have a soil test done the fall prior to planting and amend to adjust the soil pH, phosphorus, and potassium levels if necessary. Soil pH 6.5 is optimal for brambles; however, they will tolerate a higher soil pH. After the planting is established, fertilize every spring with 10-10-10 at 5 lb per 100 ft of row or 1/2 cup per hill.

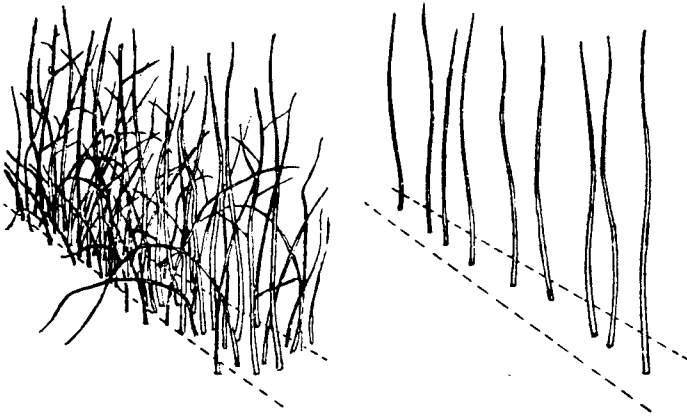
Pruning

The raspberry has a perennial crown and root system and biennial canes. The canes are vegetative the first season (primocanes) and fruit the second growing season (floricanes). The fall-fruiting or "everbearing" red raspberry will fruit on the primocane in the fall of the same growing season. Training and pruning of the red, purple, and black raspberry is slightly different, since they have different growth habits.

Summer-fruiting red raspberries

Dormant pruning in early spring:

- Remove old floricanes (fruited previous summer).
- Thin the 1-year canes, removing those that are weak, winter-damaged, and diseased. Try to select the biggest, healthiest canes. Leave 6-8 vigorous canes per linear foot of row or hill.
- Top the canes. Prune the dormant canes by removing tips killed by winter injury. If canes are trellised, cut to about 12" above support wire. If not trellised, cut the canes back to about 4 ft. Do not remove more than 1/4 of the cane height as yield will be significantly reduced.
- Remove enough canes from the edges of the rows to keep the rows no more than 12-18" wide.

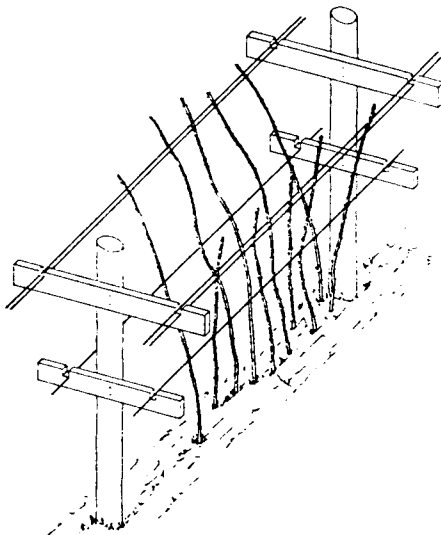


Red raspberries before and after summer pruning. These canes are planted in a narrow hedge row.

Trellising or staking is recommended to prevent wind injury. Summer tipping of the primocanes for height control of summerfruiting red raspberries is not recommended since this slows cane development and can increase winter injury susceptibility.

Everbearing or fall-fruiting red raspberries

Although both a fall and summer crop can be obtained from these types, using a fall harvest cropping system is recommended. Growing fall-fruiting (primocane fruiting) raspberries for a fall harvest reduces disease and cold hardiness problems and can extend the life of the planting. Consider fall cropping only with cultivars that ripen early. Autumn Bliss, Redwing, Summit, and FallRed ripen about 10-25 days sooner than Heritage. Nordic, although a primocane fruiting type, is recommended for summer fruiting only since the fall crop ripens later than Heritage.



An example of a support system for red raspberries.

After the plants become dormant, mow or cut the canes 1 to 2 inches above the ground. Remove the canes from the planting, unless canes are cut and shredded using a rotary mower. New canes will emerge in the spring and bear a crop in the fall of the same growing season.

Maintain plant rows at 18" wide with 6-9' between the rows. Trellising is recommended to reduce cane damage from wind and to prevent canes from drooping to the ground when heavy with fruit.

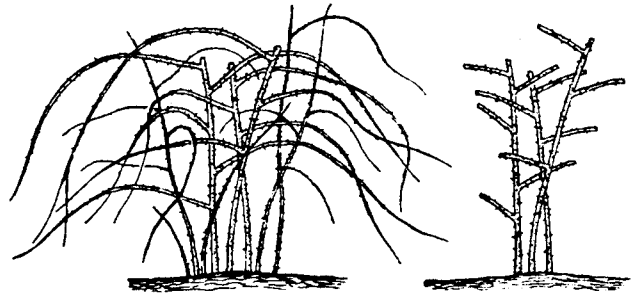
Black and purple raspberries

Summer Pruning:

- Tip primocanes when they reach the height of 28-30", to promote production of laterals. This increases the number of productive fruit buds in these types of raspberries.

Dormant pruning:

- Remove spent floricanes. Preferably right after fruiting is complete to help prevent disease spread to new canes.
- Remove weak and damaged 1 year canes, keeping canes 1/2" or greater in diameter, select 5-9 canes per plant.
- Head back strong large diameter laterals to 8 to 12"; head back weaker laterals to 2 to 4" in length.



Black raspberries before and after dormant pruning. Purple raspberries are pruned the same way, except the side branches are cut back to 24 inches.

For More Information

ExEx 6011 -- Fruit Varieties for South Dakota
 A1610 -- Growing Raspberries in Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin-Extension

Illustrations on this page reprinted courtesy of University of Wisconsin-Extension, publication A1610 Growing Raspberries in Wisconsin.



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