



Caring For Blueberries

Choosing a site:

Blueberries require a sunny location for best results. Avoid planting around trees. Trees will provide too much shade as well as take away the water and nutrients needed for blueberry success. Blueberries have very specific soil requirements. Soil needs to be well drained and high in organic matter with a pH range between 4.5 and 5.5.

Planting:

Remove the plant from the pot and loosen the roots by scoring the sides and bottom of the root ball. Spread roots as wide and shallow as the root ball will allow, being very careful to set the crown of the plant (where the main stem joins the roots) one inch higher than soil level. Acid compost or peat moss may be mixed with your soil and firmed around the roots when they are set, water plants in with root stimulator mixed with water. A mulch of aged sawdust (not cedar) or an acid planting mix, up to 6" in depth, over the entire planting will prove beneficial in discouraging weeds while keeping the plant evenly moist. Apply Espoma Holly-tone or Dr. Earth fertilizer.

After Planting Care:

Remove all the blossoms the first year after planting. This will allow your plant's roots to become more established. Add an additional couple inches of aged sawdust or acid planting mix as mulch each year. Acidic fertilizer, like Espoma Holly-tone or Dr. Earth, should be applied each February and again in the late spring each year.

Pruning:

By the third year remove weak twiggy growth. If shoots appear too crowded, remove some older shoots entirely. Blueberries can be thinned out to increase fruit size and quality. Otherwise, pruning is not necessary. All pruning should be done in the winter and early spring when the plant is dormant.

Harvest:

Berries will ripen over a 2-5 week period depending on weather and variety. Berries occur in clusters of 5-10. Don't be too excited to pick the berries when they first turn blue. They will develop better flavor if you leave them for a few days.