

# Greenwood Nursery

[www.greenwoodnursery.com](http://www.greenwoodnursery.com)

[www.landsteward.org](http://www.landsteward.org)

## Planting & Growing Brambles

### Blackberry Plants

#### Preparation:

Blackberry plants will fall into one of two types: the ones that grow in an upright erect habit and the trailing ones that need support or trellising. The upright varieties grow much as most other shrubs do. The trailing varieties often produce new plants from their root system. To keep this type of growth limited, the roots should be contained. "Planting" a barrier that is about one foot deep around the perimeter of the planting area will keep the roots from spreading and producing unwanted growth. Many materials will work for the barrier. Use what is available as long as it will prevent root expansion.

Blackberry plants like full sun and a pH of approximately 6.5. Testing the soil before planting is easier should amendments be required. Fertilizer will vary with the type of plant and the soil conditions. Again, soil testing is highly recommended before applying any fertilizer, as fertilizer is only used to balance out the soil. After seeing the test results, apply fertilizer in early spring.

Just as with strawberry plants, raspberry and blackberry plants should not be planted where eggplants, peppers, potatoes or tomatoes have been grown within the past 3 years.

#### Planting:

Space plants at least 3 feet apart with rows about five-eight feet apart. Blackberry plants produce fruit on second year shoots called floricanes. During that second

year's growth when the cane is flowering and fruiting, the plant is producing new first year shoots called primocanes. At the end of each year, prune out the floricanes, which were the branches that flowered and fruited that season. The next year, the previous season's primocanes are now floricanes, and they are flowering and fruiting and the cycle continues.

**Rule of thumb:** If the cane/limb hasn't flowered or fruited, DO NOT cut it off.

## Raspberry Plants

### Preparation:

Raspberry plants also prefer full sun and thrive in soil with a pH of 6.5. Soil testing is the best way to determine the condition of your soil and what needs to be added to balance it out. Based on results of the soil testing, apply fertilizer in March and for fall bearing raspberries, such as Heritage, make another application in May.

### Planting:

Raspberry plants should be planted about 2-3 feet apart with rows that are 3-5 feet apart. Most red raspberries have a more erect type of growth and can be kept in shrub form especially if lightly pruned. For those who want the plants to grow as tall as possible, a simple trellis can be installed to hold the taller growing canes.

Canes that flower and fruit should be removed at the ground level after they have fruited or during fall/winter clean up as well as any damaged, dead or weaker growing canes. The smaller growing canes that are produced during the growing season are vegetative canes, which should be thinned out, as they will produce fruit the following year.

**Rule of thumb:** If a cane/limb hasn't flowered or fruited, DO NOT cut it off.

Fall bearing raspberries, such as the Heritage variety can be mowed off about 2-3 inches from the ground after fall fruiting if only a fall crop is wanted. If both crops are wanted, then prune as regular raspberries.

Raspberry and Blackberry plants will provide enjoyment for about 8 to 12 years if regularly maintained.

Just as with strawberry plants, raspberry and blackberry plants should not be planted where eggplants, peppers, potatoes or tomatoes have been grown within the past 3 years.

### **Pruning Raspberry and Blackberry Plants:**

Here is a link to the University of Tennessee Extension Site with detailed information on pruning and extended care of your blackberry and raspberry plants. The file contains many drawing to further explain the procedures.

<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/spfiles/SP284-G.pdf>