

Blueberries are semi-evergreen shrubs that can grow up to 15-feet tall with beautiful white flowers in the spring. We only sell **Rabbiteye** (*Vaccinium ashei*) and **Southern Highbush** (*Vaccinium darrowii*) varieties because they will produce well in our area. Blueberries rarely have disease or insect problems and only need minimal pruning. Blueberries will produce fruit the very first season they are in the ground...but for the plant's sake, remove most of the harvest for the first year or two, just keep a few for yourself. The 3rd year and every year after that, you will have a bountiful harvest of up to 40 pounds of fruit. Next time you're in the grocery store...do the math. You can expect to harvest berries from the end of May to the end of July. Some cultivars are early and some are late, so plant an assortment to extend the season.

Blueberries need soil that is **well drained, rich in organic matter and acidic**. Without a well prepared bed, your blueberries will not thrive. Prepare the planting area by adding a minimum of 6 inches of Landscapers Pride Soil Conditioner (pH 4.1) or compost that has been "cooking" for at least a year (less than a year and compost can sprout all kinds of weeds). Mix well. Add granular sulfur (if you are not using Soil Conditioner) to create an acidic condition, just follow the product's directions. Apply an organic fertilizer and additional sulfur (if needed) when the blooming begins, in mid-May and after the fruit has been harvested. Be careful not to over fertilize, with use of an organic program the possibilities of this happening are remote.

Plant blueberries as you would an azalea by loosening the root ball and spreading them out. Add mulch around the plants, but not up to the trunk. Just like azaleas, too much mulch is a death sentence. After planting, water thoroughly. Planting them in a whiskey barrel or a very large pot has proven to be very successful. Blueberries are not self-pollinating, so plant at least two cultivars. Plant them 5- or 6-feet apart, and alternate the varieties. Blueberries can get very large, and you will want to be able to get between and around them to pick all the berries. Watering blueberries regularly is important. Extended dry periods are as great a threat as poor drainage.

Prune blueberries after you have harvested all the fruit. Removal of old wood, after the first 4 to 6 years promotes new growth and leads to heavier production...but your bushes will still bear without this pruning. Thinning the bushes aids in light penetration and makes it easier to collect all the fruit. Keeping your bushes less than 7 feet tall will make harvesting convenient and safe.

Blueberry fruiting season runs from May to July. Actual ripening depends can vary, based on chill hours, location and variety.

The greatest danger to your harvest is birds. Once they find your crop, birds will camp out and eat them as quickly as they ripen. Use bird netting to ensure that you get your share.





Rabbiteye varieties (plant several varieties together)

Becky Blue Early ripening variety with sweet, medium to large, light blue berries. A tall spreading bush.

Bountiful Blue This prolific variety produces large fruit that are super sweet. The foliage is the bluest of all varieties and only grows to 3 or 4 feet tall and wide, making it an excellent choice for a potted plant.

Brightwell An early to mid-season variety with medium-large, juicy, light blueberries with a sweet flavor. An upright, vigorous grower and a consistent producer that does best planted with Premier. Produces in between Climax and Tifblue.

Climax The earliest ripening, medium sized, dark blueberries and a sweet flavor, one of the best for Houston. An upright plant with intense green foliage that does best planted with Premier. A great variety if you freeze, bake or can them...they all ripen in a very short time.

Premier Early to mid-season variety with large, light blue, quality fruit and an excellent flavor on a highly productive, upright bush. Grows 6- to 10-feet tall and can make an interesting hedge.

Tifblue Accepted as the benchmark for all rabbiteye blueberry varieties. Mid to late season, large, light blue fruit with good quality berries that hold up well on the plant. Has great fall color on an upright plant. Tifblue is the number one blueberry selection in the country.

Woodard Early to mid season variety with quality fruit when fully ripe. Do not pick this one too early. When young this variety will fruit more heavily than others. Medium height, good for a smaller yard.

Southern Highbush varieties (plant several varieties together)

Jewel A slightly tart flavor in a very large berry. This bush grows in an upright form, making it good for tight areas. Ripens early to mid season, May to mid June.

Misty Large sized fruit on a vigorous plant. Does exceptionally well through our summers. Mid season, Ripens in June.

Sunshine Blue Hot pink flowers grow into large, tangy fruit on a compact bush...perfect to grow in a large pot. A firm berry with a great flavor. Very cold hardy and self fruitful. Early to mid season, ripens May to June.

