

# Small Fruits and Berries for the Northwest Garden

## Agenda

- What grows well in PNW
- Considerations before planting
- Planting, care and pruning tips
- Small Space gardening

## What grows well here?

- Blueberries
- Strawberries
- Cane fruit
- Grapes
- Currants & Gooseberries
- Honey Berry
- Goji Berry

## What to think about?

- Soil
- Light requirements
- Space
- Fruit purpose – fresh eating, freezing, juicing, canning, boasting
- Personal time and energy

## Blueberries

- Many excellent varieties for PNW!
- Highbush – largest, often 5+ feet
- Lowbush/Highbush – 1-4 feet
- Ripen early, mid, or late season
- Choose based on use: ripen all at once for freezing or canning, longer harvest for fresh eating
- Relatives – Lingonberries, Cranberries

## Planting Blueberries

- Sunny site, well-drained , high organic matter
- Key is acid soil –use a Rhododendron/Azalea Fertilizer, Hydrangea Bluing Solution
- Plant far enough apart for good air circulation
- Water well - plants are shallow-rooted
- Plant 2 or more different types for pollination (unless self fertile)

## Blueberry Care

- Water deeply once a week
- Avoid overhead watering
- Fertilize in early spring with Rhododendron and Azalea fertilizer once plants are 2-3 yr. old
- Avoid cultivation around roots – keep weed free, use mulch
- Pick off flowers in first year to develop strong roots
- Prune after 3<sup>rd</sup> year

- Cut out older canes
- Cut out dead and crossing canes
- Promoting healthy 2-3 yr. old canes

## Self Fertile

- Blueberry Glaze
- Jelly Bean
- Peach Sorbet
- Pink Icing
- Perpetua
- Bountiful Blue

## Good for Containers

### Peach Sorbet Blueberry

- Dwarf habit to 2 ft. tall and wide
- Glossy leaves range in color from peachy pink to orange to emerald green.
- In most climates, Peach Sorbet™ is evergreen, with rich eggplant purple winter foliage.

### Jelly Bean Blueberry

- Dwarf habit to 1 - 2 ft. tall and wide.
- Exceptionally large berries

### Blueberry Glaze

- Ornamental as well as tasty
- Berries range from yellow to red to dark blue as they ripen

### Pink Icing

- Year round foliage
- Large Berries
- Great landscape plant!

### Top Hat

- 1-2' tall
- Small, dark blue tasty berries

## Other Fun Varieties

### Pink Lemonade

- Pink berries same blueberry taste

### Nocturne

- Ornamental black berries

### Razz

- Blueberry flavor with raspberry overtones

### Perpetua

- Two crops per year!

## Strawberries

- Three types
  - June bearing (one crop, vigorous, many runners)
    - Sweet Sunrise

- Ever-bearing (small crop June, then fruit late summer to frost)
  - Albion, Tristar
- Day neutral (one crop over long period of time, very few runners)

## Planting Strawberries

- Moist, well drained soil
- Sunny – 6 hours minimum, 10+ is best
- Acid soil
- Plant 18” apart in rows 30” apart
- Soak bare root plants for an hour, keep moist while planting
- Plant base of crown at soil level to avoid rot
- Mulch - protect from late frosts, keeps soil moist

## Strawberry Care

- Fertilize lightly in spring and again after harvest for summer-bearing
- Fertilize ever-bearing lightly throughout the season
- Water regularly – at least an inch a week
- Avoid overhead watering to reduce fungal disease
- Harvest by cutting stem rather than pulling
- Mow plants down to 1 inch after harvest, thin out old plants, remove dead foliage

## Cane Fruit

Same Genus – *Rubus*- but divided into subgenera with different fruit

### Raspberry

- Ever-bearing - fruit on last year’s wood in June and this year’s wood in August
- Summer-bearing - fruit on last year’s wood in June
- Raspberry Shortcake is thornless and compact (think containers)

### Blackberry

- Fruit on last year’s wood
- Prime Ark 45 fruits on first year canes
- Triple Crown is thornless
- Baby Cakes is thornless and compact (think containers)

### Crosses

Boysenberry, Loganberry, Tayberry, Marionberry etc.

## Planting Cane Fruit

- Like sunny site with high organic matter.
- Hate wet feet – raised beds are good!
- Container – dig hole same depth as plants
- Place 2-3’ apart in rows 6’ apart
- Water thoroughly
- Fertilize lightly 4-6 weeks after planting
- Use trellis, support, wires etc. to train canes

## Pruning Cane Fruit

Summer-bearing (bear on last year's wood)

- after harvest cut fruiting canes to ground
- Thin out diseased or damaged canes in Feb-March

Ever-bearing Raspberries

- Either treat as summer-bearing or
- Trim back 1 year old canes to fruit in June and let new canes grow to fruit in Fall
- Always cut 2 year old canes to the ground

Blackberries

- after harvest cut fruiting canes to ground

## How old are the canes?

The smooth green 1-year-old canes and the rougher brown 2-year-old canes are easy to tell apart. Each spring, 1-year-old canes are trimmed back to below the fruiting area, and 2-year-old canes are removed completely.

## Grapes

- Varieties developed for PNW
- Table, juicing and wine
- Choose based on preference
  - Seedless or not
  - Green or red
  - Harvest time

## Planting Grapes

- Tolerate very poor soil
- Need lots of sun
- Don't tolerate wet soil well
- Avoid low, cold areas to protect from late frost
- Self-fertile
- Plant 8 feet apart
- Provide an arbor, trellis or fence for support

## Grape Care

- Fertilize lightly in spring with a low nitrogen or balanced fertilizer
- Drought tolerant - Water until established and then supplement during fruiting
- Warm roots with gravel, broken pottery to trap sun
- Avoid overhead watering to reduce fungal disease
- Harvest by cutting the stem

## Pruning Grapes

Many resources :

- WSU Cooperative Extension website  
<http://extension.wsu.edu/maritimefruit/Pages/GrapePruningBasics.aspx>
- The Backyard Berry Book by Stella Otto
- AHS Pruning and Training by Christopher Brickell & David Joyce

## Currants & Gooseberries

- Relatively new to US – common in Europe
- High in vitamins – A, B, C
- Black currants may need pollination from another
- White and red currants, gooseberries are generally self-fertile
- Jostaberry is a currant/gooseberry cross
- Jams, jellies, fresh eating

## Planting Currants and Gooseberries

- Average soil, some organic matter, medium moisture
- Like full sun but tolerate part shade
- Space 4' apart
- Fertilize lightly in 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- Avoid cultivation near shallow roots
- Mulch for weed control
- Great for the novice gardener!

## Currant and Gooseberry Care

- Light fertilizer every spring
- Blackcurrants bear on 1 & 2 yr. old wood. Prune out older wood every year.
- Red and white currants bear on 2&3 yr. old wood. Prune out older wood every year.
- Gooseberries bear on 2-4 yr. old wood. Prune out older wood. Spiny thorns – watch out!

## Sea Berry *Hippophae rhamnoides*

- Also known as the sea buckthorn
- Not self-fertile. Needs male to pollinate.
- Drought tolerant
- Tolerates salt spray
- Pruning not required for fruit production
- High in Vitamins C and A

## Goji berry *Lycium barbarum*

- Also known as wolfberry
- Superfood!
- Antioxidants!
- Vitamins!
- New to the West, well known in China
- Require at least 6 hours sun, well-drained soil
- Spiny, sprawling habit
- Self-fertile

## Kiwis

Fuzzy kiwi -*Actinidia deliciosa*

Hardy kiwi – *Actinidia arguta*

- Need a pollinator of the same species
- Like warm, sunny temperatures
- Against a wall or fence is good for reflective heat.
- Can train like a grape vine across an arbor
- Fruit on spurs