

# Caring for Berries. . .

## Blueberries, Gooseberries & Currants

### BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries are long-lived shrubs. They present no special cultural problems other than soil requirement. Plants are quite ornamental with a neat, compact, growth habit. Glossy foliage changes to bright orange, red and yellow in the fall. Blueberries range in height from 18" to 7' at maturity.

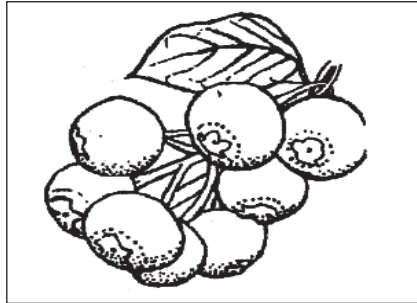
**SOIL & NUTRIENTS** - Blueberries require 1/4 pound of actual nitrogen per year per plant. Use organic acid based food, (1 cup per new plant or 3 cups per mature plant). Blueberries demand constant moisture and excellent drainage. Roots are shallow and should not be disturbed. Apply a thick mulch at the base of plants. This will eliminate weeding, retain moisture and cool the soil.

**PRUNING** - Prune in winter or early spring. Remove weak side shoots in top of plant. If shoots appear too crowded, remove some older shoots entirely. To increase fruit size, head back shoots that have an abundance of flower heads. Stripping the blossoms off the first year of planting will allow more root growth and produce more strength to the plant.

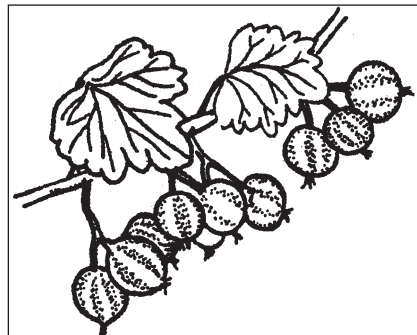
**POLLINATION**- Blueberries require cross-pollination with another variety for best fruit production. Always plant more than one variety.

**PESTS** - Blueberries suffer from very few difficulties, but birds will take them unless you net the plants.

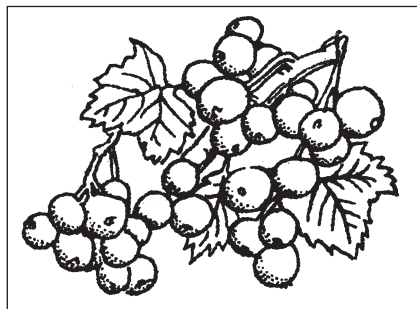
**HARVESTING & STORAGE** - Plants will reach full production in 6 to 10 years. Berries ripen over a period of 6 or 7 weeks. Select ripe berries and leave others for later picking. Handle berries carefully. Eat fresh or freeze, but they can also be made into jams or jellies.



**Blueberries**



**Gooseberries**



**Currants**

### CURRANTS & GOOSEBERRIES

Currants and Gooseberries are closely related and both highly prized for their tart to sweet-tart berries that are high in vitamin C and pectin. They can be eaten fresh with sugar and cream or made in delicious jams and jellies. Their high pectin content makes them ideal for combining with other fruits in preserves. Currants can be dried like raisins and Gooseberries make great pie! Both ripen in early to mid-summer.

#### CULTURAL REQUIREMENTS

They do best in medium to heavy, well-drained soil, with average watering. Full sun is fine in cool summer areas, otherwise give them partial shade. Mulch and fertilize with compost or manure in fall or early spring.

**POLLINATION** - Self-fruitful.