



# *Planting For Success*

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## REMEMBER:

**The success or failure of a new planting is in your hands.  
The better you care for your trees, the sooner they will  
reward your efforts.**

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## When Trees Arrive (Mail Order)

- Open box and check to confirm that all plants on packing slip have arrived in good condition. Sometimes small seedlings or plants are almost hidden among the larger tree roots. Notify us of any problems.
- Ideally – plant as soon as possible.
- Soaking the roots in water for 1 – 2 hours before planting is beneficial.



### If Not Suitable to Plant Immediately:

- We do our best to keep your bareroot trees as dormant as possible until you receive them. Even if they have begun to bud out in transit, they should be stored in a cool, dark place (basement, garage, cooler) until you can plant them.
- Be sure to keep roots moistened as needed while still in storage. Check every day or so. Trees can be stored up to 2 weeks.
- An ideal planting day is calm, overcast and even drizzly. If the weather is very warm and breezy it is better to delay until late afternoon if possible.

### IMPORTANT

Keep the roots **well covered and moist** up to the moment you plant

## Hole Preparation

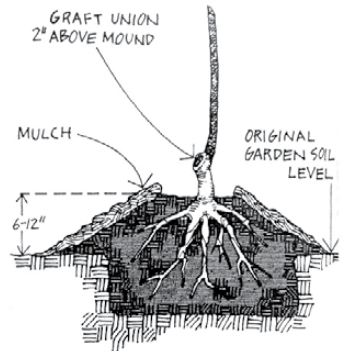
- Remove all sod and weeds around the hole area. Any grass will steal moisture and nutrients from your newly planted tree.
- Dig your hole more than wide enough to accommodate the spreading feeder roots of your tree, but only slightly deeper than the roots. The bottom and sides of the hole should be well fractured so the roots can penetrate easily.
- Make a little mound in the bottom of the hole and spread the roots so they are facing outwards and slightly downwards. Trim off any broken roots.
- Grafted trees should have the graft union (that crooked knob above the roots) approximately 3 – 8 cm (1 – 3 inches) above the finished soil level when backfilled. Laying your shovel crosswise over the planting hole, beside the tree trunk, is a simple way to gauge this.
- Interstem apple trees are a notable exception. Since they have two graft unions, most growers recommend planting with the finished soil level half way between the grafts. If you plant it higher, you will get a smaller tree at maturity, but with too many root suckers.
- Shovel the soil back into the hole tamping it firmly around the root system while adding water to eliminate all air pockets.
- We suggest mixing Alfalfa Gold (an organic fertilizer) with the soil as you backfill the top half of the hole, as it contains valuable nutrients such as bone meal and worm castings.
- If your planting site has poor or gravelly soil, you may want to amend your backfill soil with some compost or triple mix but don't overdo it. Two shovel fulls is lots. Do not add any fresh manure or chemical fertilizer. It could burn the feeder roots.

- If your soil is well drained, make a shallow basin around the tree to retain water. If it is not well drained, refer to "Problem Soil" on page 2.
- Water slowly and thoroughly after planting – up to 20 litres for trees, and approximately 10 litres for shrubs and small fruit. Dormant trees should usually not be watered again until they leaf out. Too much water in dormancy can reduce root development or even drown the tree.
- After leafing out, your tree should receive a good soaking twice weekly: 15 – 20 litres. Adjust accordingly to rainfall and soil type. Mulching is very helpful to retain moisture.
- Trees should be supported or staked for better growth, especially in the first season (permanently for dwarfs).

## Problem Soil

**Clay and soggy soil can be a major problem. If planting in heavy soil is your only option, you may want to use the following method:**

- Dig only a shallow hole and place some loose, sandy topsoil into it approximately 4-5" thick.
- Set the roots on this topsoil layer, mound soil 6- 12" above the original soil surface over the entire area of the planting hole. The soil mixture for the mound should be a higher percentage of compost to provide good drainage and fertility. Cover the mound with mulch so it won't dry out too quickly.



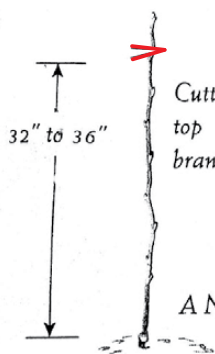
'PLANT HIGH IN CLAY SOILS'

\*Photo reference: Designing & Maintaining Your Edible Landscape Naturally

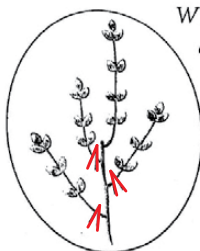
## Pruning Apple and Pear Trees at Planting

- **For fall plantings, wait until early spring to prune.**
- If you purchased a bare root tree through mail order, it may already have been cut back. If not, it is a good idea to do it immediately after planting.
- The long range plan is to prune and train to maintain a 'central leader' type tree (shaped like a Christmas tree). This method is also often used for mulberry and cherry trees.
- If no branches are present (single whip), trim one year old whips of dwarf trees at 32" - 36", semi- dwarf and standard whips at 42" - 48". Make the cut just above a strong, fat bud.
- Side branches will develop in the top 16" under the top where you have cut it. A branch that forms 36" from the ground will always be at that height.
- Leaving the whips untrimmed may result in branching out too high.

Where you see this  
symbol: ➤ make the trim.



Cutting down the top will force side branches to develop.



When this results at the top, allow only one upright shoot to continue as the leader. Remove the next 2 or 3 shoots in early summer of the first year. This is very important! The lower shoots can become the first set of branches.

\*Photo reference: Backyard Fruit Production

## 2 year old branched trees (apple and pear):

- Completely remove the two branches which are below the leader. These branches generally make narrow angles and can cause splitting of your trees later on.
- Cut back leader to 18" above upper most branches you want to keep.
- Shorten branches to 12" long, making sure the last bud is always facing out. A young tree will bear fruit sooner when limbs are properly trained in its first and second year.
- Use tree training rubbers, props, or weights to accomplish the proper horizontal limb positions (see next page).

## Pruning Peach, Nectarine, Plum and Apricot Trees

- Most stone fruit trees, as well as pawpaws and persimmons, are usually pruned to create an 'open center' or vase shaped tree. The idea is to keep the center of the tree open for light and air penetration.
- Whips (unbranched trees) should be trimmed back to approximately 40 cm (36").
- For 2 year old branched trees, branches that are too close together should be totally removed. Keep wide angled, well positioned branches. Trim these back to 3 or 4 buds. This is important, especially with peach trees, which might dry out if the top is not reduced.
- Although the tree may look unpleasant after pruning, it will grow and thrive far better than if it had been planted with its branches intact.



Before Pruning



After Pruning

## Training Young Trees

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- Unless trained otherwise, young trees will often grow too vertical in shape. 45-60 degree angles are ideal for branch growth. This not only makes stronger branches, it also induces the tree to start producing at a younger age.
- The photo to the left demonstrates how to use Limb Spreaders (see Orchard Supplies section in the rear of our catalogue). Various other techniques include clothes pins, tying down branches or hanging weights on them.

## Pruning in Year Two and Beyond

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- Many people prune their fruit trees in early spring. However, unless you are in a very cold region (Zone 3 or less) you should really consider doing your pruning in July or August. Spring pruning stimulates more vegetative growth which means even more pruning for next spring. Summer pruning slows the growth of the limb being pruned and actually causes some of the buds to change from vegetative buds into fruit buds for the next season.
- For further helpful pruning or training advice, we highly recommend consulting one of the following books:
  - *Grow a Little Fruit Tree* by Ann Ralph
  - *The Pruning Book* by Lee Reich

## Orchard Aftercare

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**We cannot stress enough the importance of grass and weed control on young trees. Grass can rob young trees of nutrients as they struggle to become established and grow. Also, tree roots are prevented from moving into soil that is controlled by grass roots. Trees are stunted by the competition and the results are apparent for several years, if not longer. Prevent this from happening by following these instructions:**

- Spread mulch of deciduous (trees that lose their leaves) wood chips around the tree, not thicker than 2" thick and about 2-3 feet out.
- Avoid mounding it up against the trunk, as it attracts rodents and the trunk area beneath the mulch remains too moist, rotting the bark.
- Keep the mulch a couple of inches away from the trunk. Spoiled hay, shredded leaves, shredded bark, composted manure etc. also work great.

Mulch offers such a great advantage that it would be a mistake not to use it with your orchard and berry plants. In addition to enhancing the structure of the soil and providing fertility as it rots, it suppresses weeds and grasses that steal soil nutrients, prevents erosion from wind and rain, keeps soil cooler, helps delay spring bloom in cold climates, and helps retain soil moisture. It also encourages earthworms along with other soil organisms and protects against rapid freezing and thawing of the ground.

## Document

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**Most tree tag labels go missing in the time between planting the tree and picking the first fruit, so use a map or chart to record plant names, dates and any other information such as where you bought the plants. A record of your plantings will not only identify the fruits when they start to bear, but will also help if you need to replace any trees.**

- We suggest moving the tree tag from the main trunk to a side branch by year two or it can actually strangle the tree as the trunk expands.

## Preparing for Winter

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**We recommend protecting the graft for at least the first few winters. There are several ways of doing so:**

- You can put a section of foam insulation meant for  $\frac{3}{4}$ " water pipes around the tree trunk. Wrap your white plastic tree guard around the foam insulation to keep it in place (as well as protecting against mice and rabbits).
- Or you can mound up some sand or soil around the base of the tree so that the graft is buried.
- Either way - the graft must be uncovered again in the spring.

## Growing Blueberries

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***Here are three different ways to plant blueberries at your home:***

### **IN A RAISED BED**

Dig up a small amount of your existing soil, a couple of inches deep, and then lay landscape cloth in the space where you want to create the bed in order to discourage weed growth and to stop leeching of your existing soil in the peat. Put wet Canadian sphagnum peat moss around your bushes, about 10 inches deep, and 24-36 inches wide. Blueberry bush roots do not penetrate deep, but do like to spread out a bit. We would recommend covering the peat with a mulch of your choice so the peat doesn't dry out too quickly, and again to keep weed growth down.



### **IN A PLANTER (most recommended for small quantities)**

For smaller spaces, on decks, or anywhere in your front or back yard, blueberry bushes can live forever in a planter. However, you will need a large planter at least 15 gallons, similar to a large wooden barrel cut in half, or large plastic pot. Clay pots are not recommended as they could crack while outside over the winter months. Once planted, the bushes can remain outside in the planter forever. They should not be brought inside for the winter.

### **IN THE GROUND**

If you have sandy, acidic soil, planting the blueberry bushes right in the ground is an option. If you have heavy clay or soils with a pH over 6.0, this is not a recommended

option because the clay could leach into your peat moss and affect its acidity. If you choose to plant directly into the ground, excavate the existing soil at least 10 inches deep and 36 inches around each bush. Again, landscape fabric is a good way to help keep the soils separate. Another option is to put a large plastic or wooden pot right into the ground and then you can be sure that the original soil will not leach into your Canadian Spaghnum peatmoss. Cover the area with wood chips or mulch, along with the rest of your garden, and you have a seamless incorporation of an acid-loving plant.

### **FERTILIZER, WATERING, PRUNING**

It is important to apply fertilizer two times a year, but no later than mid-July. We suggest using Blueberry Booster, an organic sulfur humate fertilizer to help maintain low pH. It is important not to fertilize too late in the season, i.e. no later than mid-July, or else the bushes will be too stimulated and not harden off in time for winter.

During the first year of planting, watering is important to help establish the root system. Bushes should be watered once a week, and maybe more if the weather is particularly hot and dry. However, over-watering is a concern. If you have mulch on your bushes, you may only need to water every other week. If the soil is moist, that is enough water.

In the beginning, your bushes will not need to be pruned. After about 5-7 years, it is important to remove 1-2 of the older canes each year to promote new growth and increase the amount of blueberries produced.

Through these simple practices, blueberries can grow and thrive for many years.

## **Growing Grapes**

### **THE PLANTING SITE:** *Selecting and preparing*

Choose an area with rich loam or sandy loam soil. Work up the area well so there is ample loose soil. Provide good drainage. Slightly ridging up or berming the planting row is beneficial.

### **SPACING**

Plants should be spaced 6' to 8' apart. Row should be 8' to 10' apart

### **PLANTING**

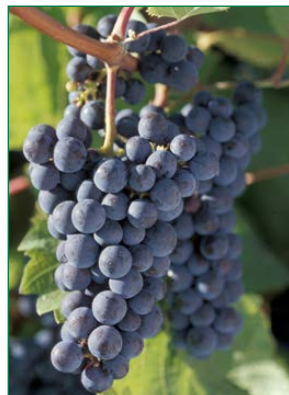
**The roots can dry out very quickly. Never allow them to become dry at any time.**

If possible, soak the roots briefly before or during planting.

Keep moist during planting. Grapes do best when planted in the upper topsoil level with roots outstretched. This is better than placing the roots in a deep hole that drops into the subsoil. Dig a small trench and spread out the roots. The roots can be planted at an angle in the topsoil area.

### **PRUNING:** *At Planting*

Immediately after planting, cut down 2 or 3 active buds. Within a few weeks, select the most vigorous of these and allow only a single vine to grow upward, removing all others throughout the first growing season. Train the shoot upward, using a stake or trellis system.





## Pruning: Mature Plant

Grapes bear fruit on current year's growth and must be pruned to stimulate fruiting. The two most commonly used pruning methods are cane pruning and stock pruning. Both methods accomplish the same purpose, which is to remove excess or non-productive vines for production of high-quality fruit.

## FERTILIZING

Do not fertilize the first year. Apply 1/2lb. fertilizer (10-10-10 or equivalent) per plant the year after planting. Apply approximately one lb. per plant annually thereafter.

## MULCH AND WEED CONTROL

Do not allow grass or weeds to compete with grape plants. Use a layer of composted mulch over the root system area.

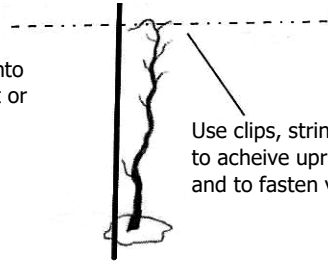
### First Year



Maintain only a single vine during the first year by removing excess shoots as they develop. Continue to tie young growing vine to stake or trellis

### Second Year

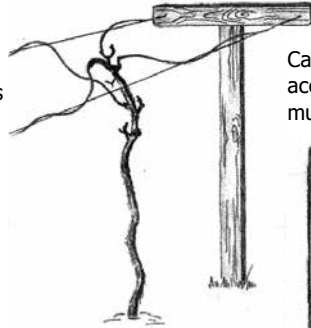
Train onto support or arbor



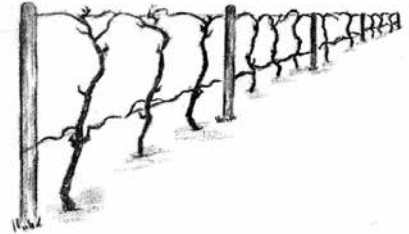
Use clips, string or twine to achieve upright growth and to fasten vines

## Pruning Grapes

There are two basic systems of pruning grapes- cane pruning and stick pruning. Both systems accomplish the same purpose, which is removing excess or nonproductive vine to stimulate the production of high quality fruit.

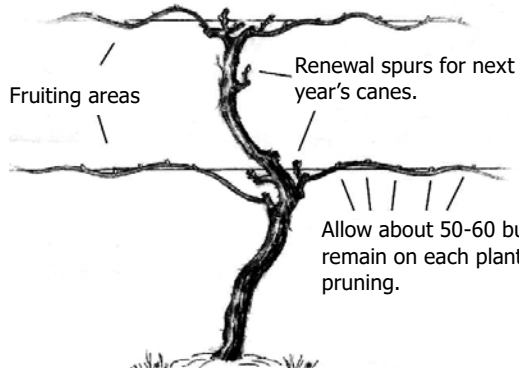


Cane pruning is best accomplished in single or multiple wire arrangements



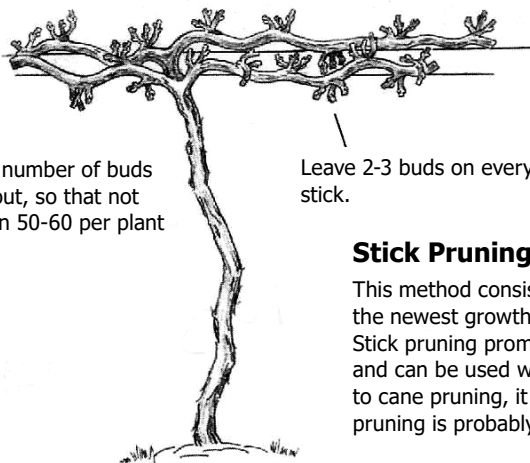
## Cane Pruning

Cane pruning annually replaces the entire fruit-bearing cane with one that grew the current summer. After one season is completed, remove the entire length of the fruited cane except for 2-3 buds at the base, which form the renewal spurs for a new vine the following year.



Renewal spurs for next year's canes.

Allow about 50-60 buds to remain on each plant after pruning.



Limit the number of buds to grow out, so that not more than 50-60 per plant remain.

Leave 2-3 buds on every stick.

### Stick Pruning

This method consists of shortening or cutting back the newest growth of the current year to 2-3 buds. Stick pruning promotes a more dense foliage canopy and can be used where shade is desired. Compared to cane pruning, it is more time-consuming. Stick pruning is probably more suited for arbors.

## Growing Raspberries and Blackberries

### THE PLANTING SITE: *Selecting and preparing*

Choose an area with rich loam or sandy loam soil. It is ideal to add composted mulch or organic matter to the site. Work up the area well so there is ample loose soil. Provide good drainage. Slightly ridging up or berming the planting row is beneficial.

The pH of the soil should be in the 5.6 to 6.5 range. Avoid a site where tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, or eggplant grew within the last 4 years. It is best not to have red and black raspberries in the same immediate area.

### SPACING

Red raspberries space 18"-24". Black raspberries space 24"-30" apart. Blackberries space 36"-48" apart. Allow 6'-10' between rows.

### PLANTING

**The roots can dry out very quickly. Never allow them to become dry at any time.** If possible, soak the roots briefly before or during planting. Keep moist during planting. Do not plant too deeply. Generally about 1-2 inches deep is correct. **Water well immediately after planting.**

At planting, cut down the cane portion. Red raspberries and black raspberry transplants can be cut down so that only 8 to 12 inches remain. Black raspberry rooted tips can be cut to just above ground level. The top portion may not leaf out. What you want is new shoots that emerge from the root clump.

### IRRIGATION:

Water or irrigate 2 or 3 times weekly. (1" to 2" rainfall each week) Cover newly planted raspberries with straw mulch or similar material to retain moisture.

### FERTILIZING:

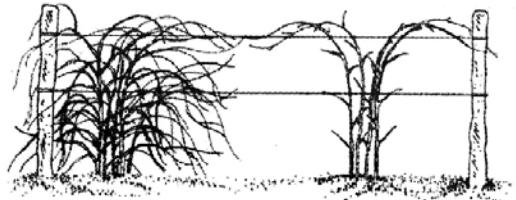
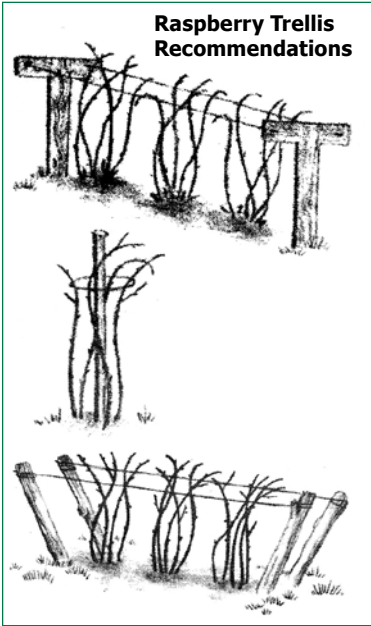
Do not fertilize at planting. Apply 5 lbs. per 100' row (10-10-10 or similar) 6-8 weeks after planting. The second year use 10 lbs per 100' row. Use 5-10 lbs. lime annually on every 100' row. Brambles respond well to good liming and fertilizing practices.

## PRUNING:

Brambles must be pruned to maintain a healthy, productive plant. Because of different plant habits, red and black raspberries are pruned with different methods. Blackberries are pruned similar to black raspberries, except they are allowed to grow higher and have longer side shoots.

## SUPPORT SYSTEM

A support system using staking or wire is recommended for black raspberries and blackberries.



*Thornless blackberries before and after dormant pruning.*

## PRUNING BLACK RASPBERRIES

Black Raspberries produce a crop for only one season on each cane. Remove the cane right after it has fruited, or you can wait to remove it until the following spring. (It will then appear as a dead cane.) Shorten the long young laterals that come off the main cane to 6"-10" stubs or about 8-12 buds.

Thin out or reduce the number of canes to 4-6 strong growing stalks per clump or plant.



## Summer Tipping

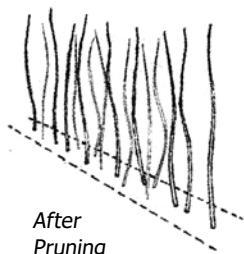
To increase lateral growth for next year's crop, pinch off the growing tips of the new canes during June through August once they reach the desired height of 3.5'-5' tall.

## Pruning Red Raspberries (2 Methods)

### Method 1



Before Pruning



After Pruning

### Method 2

**Low Maintenance Pruning for Red Raspberries** Everbearing red varieties can be mowed off right down to the ground or as low as possible to eliminate any hand pruning. This removes all the old floricanes and you will have fruit only on the new growth in the following fall.

### Pruning Blackberries

Thornless Blackberries often suffer winterkill on the young growth. Prune out all dead stalks. Remove the laterals that hang onto the ground or are within 18 inches to the ground. Head the laterals back to 12 to 18 inches long. Thin out small diameter canes and leave only four to six per plant. Tie them together to form them onto a support or wire.

## Growing Strawberries

### THE PLANTING SITE: *Selecting and preparing*

Avoid planting strawberries in the same space where any of the following crops were grown in the previous year: strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, potatoes, tomatoes or peppers. Choose an area with rich loam or sandy loam soil. In clay soils, add composted mulch or organic matter to the site. Work up the area well so there is ample loose soil. Avoid poorly drained areas. Ideal soil pH is 6.5 to 6.8.

### SPACING

Space plants 12" to 18" apart. Rows 3' to 4' apart.

### PLANTING

Plants can be stored in a cold area (refrigerator, etc.) if you are not ready to plant immediately.

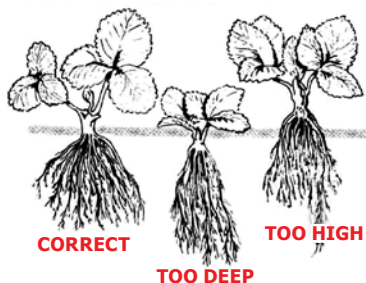
If possible, soak the roots briefly before or during planting. Keep moist during planting. Extra long roots can be trimmed down to 5" or 6" with a scissors rather than curling them up into the planting hole. Do not plant too deeply. Tamp soil firmly around the plant. Water well at planting.

### IRRIGATION

Newly established strawberry plants need continued moisture all summer long.

### FERTILIZING

Do not fertilize at planting. In July or August following planting, apply foliar fertilizer or ½ lb of 10-10-10 fertilizer (or equivalent) per 100 sq. ft. The second year use foliar fertilizer or 1 to 1½ lbs of 10-10-10 per 100 sq. ft., applied during July or August.



## **WEED CONTROL**

After planting, remove weeds by cultivating weekly. Do not allow weeds to compete with the new plants.

## **MULCHING**

Mulching is necessary, especially in northern regions. Mulch keeps fruit clean, conserves moisture, and suppresses weeds. Straw is ideal. Avoid wet, heavy, or decaying mulch. After several hard frosts in fall, apply a layer of straw directly over the plants. A few plant leaves may still be visible. In spring, uncover plants, raking straw into the aisles.

## **THE FIRST SEASON**

### **Removing Blossoms.**

Most plants will form blossoms within the first month after they are planted. Removing the entire active blossoms and the stem where they are attached will allow the plants to become better established. June bearing varieties should not be permitted to bear fruit the first summer. Everbearing or fall bearing varieties can start producing the first fall. The blossoms should be left to mature on the mother plants after the first of July.

## **MAINTAINING WEED CONTROL**

The primary work of a new strawberry patch is to keep it free of weed competition. Herbicides, hand hoeing, or mechanical cultivation is needed.



## **ROW SYSTEMS**

### **Plasticulture**

Setting the plants on strips of plastic eliminates the need of intense weed control. On the other hand, runner control and irrigation are then considered more involving.

It is best to keep all runners removed in such a system. Only the mother plant is used for production. Plants need to be much closer together when no runners are being established.

### **Matted Rows**

Runner establishment is essential in a matted row system. Runners are randomly spaced or simply allowed to fill the row with young plants.

More production and larger berries can be developed by carefully spacing and limiting the amount of runners to six or less per plant.

## **FEEDING OR FERTILIZING**

### **Fall Fertilizing**

Late summer (early August-early September) are important periods to fertilize for blossom development in next spring's crop. Irrigate after applying fertilizer or spread it just before a rain. Fertilization during dry, hot weather with no irrigation can seriously damage plants.

## **WINTER PROTECTION**

### **Straw Cover**

Use clean wheat straw for the ultimate winter cover protection. Apply just enough to create a complete layer over the plants and the row middles. A one to two inch thickness is sufficient. Apply when the plants are dormant (leaves start to discolor). Usually around Thanksgiving Day.

Remove slightly, or part away, the heaviest part of the straw over the top of the plants in the spring. It is important to allow enough straw cover for the plants to grow through it and develop most of the berries on top of the straw mulch. This assures in having less fungal diseases and much cleaner fruit.

## **Wildlife Habitat Tree Plantings**

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To attract wildlife to your acreage, providing FOOD SOURCES is the greatest secret. A variation of food sources is beneficial to the diet. Fruits attract a greater variation of wildlife species. Wildlife soon discover good food sources and stay close to them

Fruit trees can be established quite easily. They are able to provide lots of attractive good. Apple trees, various other fruit trees or nuts are permanent plantings that add beauty and provide food year after year. Once they are established they require very minimal care.



### **SELECTING SITES**

Plant in areas that provide adequate drainage. Ridges are preferred. Avoid planting in low, swampy sections. Hillsides or banks that have sufficient topsoil are suitable places to plant. Select semi-shaded or open field areas. Avoid planting in deeply wooded, shady sections. Fruits will be of much higher quality where direct sunlight is received at least 60% of the time.

### **PLANTING PROCEDURE**

Spade up a small area slightly larger than the root system of the tree planning to plant. Set the tree into the hole. Spread out the roots. Plant wildlife trees deeper than orchard trees. Mound up to soil to cover the graft union. This will create a vigorous rooted tree. Tamp the soil over the roots to avoid air pockets. Water well after planting and cover the fresh soil area with leaves, mulch or compost.

### **PRUNING**

Wildlife habitat trees should be pruned differently than orchard trees. At planting, prune off side branches from 4' - 5' from the ground. Allow the top to grow up out of the reach of browsing deer.

Keep pruning limited until the tree is well established. Later, as the trees continue to develop, prune out several entire limb sections to maintain a larger, spreading crown area.



