

BLUEBERRIES

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What does pie, jam, candy, muffins, smoothies, and even yogurt have in common? They can all be blueberry flavored! Blueberries are one of the most versatile fruit that can be grown in your backyard. They provide a great source of potassium and vitamin C and are even a recommended choice of fruit by doctors. While blueberries require time and effort, the pay-off is that you will have a natural source of vitamins and minerals that taste delicious. Read below to learn more about blueberries, their ideal habitat, and popular varieties we carry.

Light & Soil Requirements

Blueberries grow best in full sun. They require at least 6 to 8 hours of direct sunlight to thrive. Blueberries are also particular when it comes to the soil type. Typically, blueberries prefer a soil pH of 4.0 to 5.5. They do not perform well in alkaline soil. While there are many different soil mixes that can be used for blueberries, we at Red Barn recommend using a mix that is ½ peat moss and ½ compost, mixed with an acidic amendment such as Micro Life acidifier. You can also add expanded shale to the soil mix to help increase drainage. This mix will ensure your blueberry has the ideal soil pH while also providing drainage and nutrients.

Watering Requirements

Blueberries are somewhat sensitive to watering issues. Newly planted blueberries should be checked daily for watering. These should be watered as the top layer of soil dries out. For mature plants that are at least 1 year old, they can receive about ½ gallon of water per day. Going into the 2nd year, you can increase the watering to about 1 gallon per day and increase it 1 gallon each year after that until it is receiving 5 gallons per day. Depending on the soil you are using, they might dry out faster or even retain more moisture. The use of mulch will also aid in retaining moisture for your plant. You can use cedar mulch for this, and it will act as a natural insect repellent. Also be sure to monitor your watering schedule and adjust accordingly.

Fertilizing & Pruning

Most plants produce feeder roots that are used to uptake water and nutrients. Rabbiteye blueberries, unfortunately, do not produce these which requires them to rely on other methods. The most common method for Rabbiteye varieties comes in the way of a beneficial fungi called mycorrhizae. This fungus establishes a network in the soil and helps pass nutrients to areas that need it. Along with adding mycorrhizae, you can also fertilize using ammonium sulfate. This should be added in 1 oz increments for each year the plant has been in the ground. Do not fertilize newly planted blueberries until they are established. When looking at pruning, you can consider pruning about 20% of the plant as it grows each year. Prune during dormancy.

Popular Varieties	Chill Hours	Harvest Time	Pollenizers
Brightwell	400	June / July	Premier, Climax, Powder
Climax	450	May / June	Premier, Brightwell, Powder
Premier	550	May / June	Brightwell, Climax
Powder Blue	600	June / July	Tifblue, Brightwell
Tifblue	650	June / July	Brightwell, Climax, Premier

