

Blueberry Planting & Growing Guide

Questions? Contact us at (888) 784-1722 or helpdesk@groworganic.com

Cultural Requirements: Delicious, exceptionally nutritious, high in bioflavonoids. Gardeners in warmer climates can enjoy growing blueberries by choosing one of the Southern Highbush varieties. These require fewer chill hours than the Northern Highbush which require over 1000 hours. Consider climate suitability, ripening season and fruit size when selecting varieties and include at least two different varieties for cross-pollination and fruiting (any two varieties will do, regardless of ripening time). Grow in acidic, well-drained soil. Cottonseed meal is an excellent fertilizer for blueberries along with good quality compost. Mulching with acidic materials has proved beneficial for soils that are not ideal for blueberry growing. Fir sawdust or bark dust, applied at a depth of two to four inches, also eliminates most of the need for cultivation and conserves moisture. Blueberries' shallow, compact root system makes regular irrigation a necessity.

Heeling In: When your bare root plants arrive, open the plastic bags immediately. It is best to plant right away, within a week of delivery, however if you cannot plant right away, you may "heel in" the plants to protect them and keep them alive (but still dormant) until you are able to plant them in their permanent spot.

Outdoors: To heel in bare root plants outside, pick a location that is shielded from wind. Dig a trench about twice as deep as the roots are long, with one side of the trench sloping at a 45° angle. Place in the hole roots side down, so that the plant is supported by the sloping side. Cover the roots with soil or sand and gently tamp down to avoid air pockets. Periodically check the root area, keeping the soil moist.

Indoors: To heel in bare root blueberries indoors, whether due to snow or a frozen ground, choose a cool place like a root cellar, basement, or garage. It's important to choose a place where the temperature stays between 38°F and 45°F. This is important so the roots neither freeze, nor does the plant break dormancy. Place the roots in a container with soil or sand and be sure to keep the root area moist.

Planting & Growing: Blueberries ultimately reach a height of 6' or more with a spread of 4' or more. Therefore, the rows should be at least 8' apart with plants spaced no closer than 6' apart, unless a hedge is desired. The top of the root clump should be close to the surface if a mulch is used or about 4" deep without mulch. If you are planting bushes in pulp pots score the sides of the pots and remove the bottom of the pot before you plant the bush and pot in the ground. Blueberries are also very adaptable to container culture. **Do NOT mulch your blueberries with bark or saw dust from Cedar or Redwood trees!**

Fertility: For mineral soils that are well-balanced, a yearly application of a high acid organic fertilizer is ideal. It should be applied in early spring, on the surface of the mulch in a broad ring around the plant, regardless of plant size. The regular addition of phosphorus is important for fruit production. Periodic soil testing will show whether pH and nutrient needs are being met.

Important Information

- **If your plants arrived damaged**, take photographs and contact us immediately and we will provide you with a refund of the purchase price, or a replacement.
- **You should plant your blueberries within a week of delivery.** If you are unable to do so, you can plant it in a pot or "heel in" your blueberries until you are able to plant.
- **In the rare event that your blueberries do not leaf out by May 15th**, we offer a Limited Guarantee on dormant plants. See the last page for details.

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Videos

Planting & Growing Blueberries
How to Heel In Bare Root Trees

Blogs

Blueberry Basics
How to Prune Blueberries
Extend Your Blueberry Harvest
Growing Blueberries in Containers
Landscaping with Edible Plants



Fruit Production: Two different varieties must be planted to ensure cross-pollination and fruit set. Any two varieties will cross-pollinate regardless of ripening time. The early varieties begin ripening in June and the late varieties in early August. When planting two or three year old plants, the blossoms should be removed for a year or two to promote vegetative growth and development of a strong root system. Blueberries tend to over-bear rather than under-bear. Thinning blossoms will promote larger fruit and a healthier bush. A large plant may produce 15 to 20 pounds of fruit.

Pruning: After the plant is established, you may remove old wood. Some of the vegetative wood may be removed to prevent the plant from becoming too sprawling or too high. Blueberries become sweeter the longer they remain on the bush. The only reason to pick early (as they turn color), is to prevent the birds from eating them first. Home gardeners often protect their plants from birds with netting or bird scare tape.



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Perishable Items (3-Day Return Policy):

We guarantee the perishable items we sell to be in good, viable condition when we sell them. Perishable items include, but are not limited to, garlic bulbs, flower bulbs, seed potatoes, onion sets & transplants, bare-root trees, vegetable crowns... etc. If your perishable item arrives in substandard condition, please contact us within 3 days of the purchase date (or delivery date) and we will provide you with a refund of the purchase price (including shipping costs), or a replacement. Accordingly, we urge you to open any boxes marked as "Perishable" immediately upon receiving them. Because some perishable items can deteriorate very quickly, we cannot accept any claims beyond the 3-day time frame as it becomes too difficult to determine if these items were delivered in substandard condition, or if they turned into such substandard condition because of having been improperly cared for or stored once delivered.

Limited Dormant Tree & Plant Guarantee (When Planted in the Ground by April 1st)

Claim Deadline is June 1st (with the exception of persimmon trees, which have a deadline of June 15th). Claims placed after June 1st (or June 15th for persimmon trees) will be denied.

Please note: Our trees will come to you topped off at approximately 3 ft. in height to put the tree's stored energy into root development vs. foliage production.

What We Guarantee

Our only guarantee is that your dormant tree/plant will arrive in good, viable condition and will leaf out by May 15th (historically 98% of our trees do). This guarantee is only available to customers who purchased their tree/plant directly from us, and who planted their tree/plant in the ground by April 1st (or temporarily in a pot if the ground in their zone was still frozen solid).

What We Cannot Guarantee

We cannot guarantee that your tree/plant remains alive & healthy, or bears fruit, as there are too many variables beyond our control in order to do so (i.e. soil preparation, planting, fertilization, weed & pest control, adequate irrigation and/or drainage, chill hours, compatible hardiness for your zone, proper choice of pollinator, etc).

How to Request a Credit

If your tree/plant does not leaf out by May 15th, please perform a scratch test by checking for green under the bark, a few inches over the graft. If the scratch test reveals a brown cambium, that means your tree/plant is dead or dying. Watch our video titled Bare Root (Dormant) Warranty on how to perform this simple test. If the scratch test revealed that your plant is dead or dying, pull it from the ground and take pictures of the entire tree/plant, including the roots. Submit your claim & pictures by using the "Return an Item" tool on our Customer Service page (or email us at helpdesk@groworganic.com) no later than June 1st (or June 15th for persimmon trees). We will review your claim and issue you a credit (not a refund) for the purchase price of your tree/plant (excluding shipping).*

(We reserve the right to not issue credit for items already replaced. We also reserve the right to require photographic evidence that the tree/plant was not killed by root rot, rodent or mechanical damage.*

Limitation of Remedy

We warrant to the extent of the purchase price only that the seeds or plants sold hereunder are as described on the label within recognized tolerances. No other warranty is given, expressed or implied, of (1) the merchantability or fitness of the seeds or plants for any particular purpose, or (2) against loss due to any cause. We cannot accept any responsibility for the many uncontrollable growing and climatic conditions (soil preparation, fertilization, weed and pest control, temperature control, irrigation...etc.) that must be met to insure the success of your crop(s) or plants.

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