



## **Raspberry Care**

Raspberries like full sun locations. A spot with at least 8 hours of sun in the summer will work best. Your soil should be well drained and well amended. One easy means of achieving this is to add compost. If you spread about 2” to 3” of compost over your bed and then till it in about a foot deep, your edibles will grow with greater health and vigor. Also, you will want to insure that you create your berry garden near a water source, as you will need to irrigate during the heat of summer.

Raspberries require some special preparation. We recommend that you install a support system for the canes. Typically two sturdy posts are installed three feet apart at either end of the row. Wire is run between the posts down the length of the bed. As the raspberry canes grow the wires will hold them up. The wire should be placed about 4 feet off the ground.

When planting your raspberry canes, space them about 18” to 24” apart. If you are planting multiple rows, space them 6’ apart. Planting should be done in February or March. This allows the canes to become established more quickly. First soak your bare root canes in water as you prepare to plant. The hole should be about 1 ½ times larger than the roots. Next apply our organic Start Right transplant stimulant directly to the roots. Set the cane upright in the hole and cover with amended soil an inch or two above the top root. A couple of weeks after planting make sure that you apply our certified organic Complete fertilizer for proper nutrition.

Raspberries grow vigorously by root suckers, which will soon fill in the spaces. Do not expect much fruit production the first season. Your goal is to grow large canes for next year. The exception will be if you plant evergreen type raspberries. On these, you may get a small crop of berries during the first year.

Raspberries are perennial plants, meaning that they come back year after year. The canes on a raspberry are biennial, meaning that an individual cane lives two years. New canes emerge from the ground every spring. There are two families of raspberries that require different care.

July bearing varieties give you one large crop. The first year a cane grows but does not flower. The following year they produce fruit in July and die. After a cane produces you prune it to the ground to encourage new cane growth for future years.

Everbearing plants fruit in early summer and again in fall. New canes emerge from the ground and bear fruit on their top portions in fall. This same cane will bear fruit on its lower portion in the following spring, the second year of its growth. Therefore, when the fall harvest is over, prune the tops of new canes down to about 3’ tall. You should also prune out second year canes and weak canes at this time.

Alternatively on everbearing varieties you can elect to obtain only one larger harvest per year by using a different pruning method. Prune them down to the ground after the fall harvest to encourage one large crop the following autumn. This type of pruning forces the plant to spend the entire summer growing the canes.