SUMMER-BEARING and EVERBEARING RASPBERRIES (*Rubus spp.*)

**Check your plants immediately after receiving them. Please remove your summer-bearing or everbearing raspberry canes from their box as soon as possible. You have received dormant canes that have not leafed out yet. We recommend transplanting them outside as soon as possible. If you are not able to transplant them outside right away, store in a cool location (32–40°F/0–4°C), and keep the roots damp.**

**LIFE CYCLE:** Perennial. Hardiness varies by variety; please check our catalog or website descriptions for more information.

**SITE SELECTION:** Raspberries thrive in well-drained soil, with a sunny, open location. A slightly sloped area that encourages good air and water movement is desirable. Many disease and environmental problems can be minimized by planning ahead and planting in the appropriate site. Soil that remains water saturated can result in winter injury or disease problems. If your site is poorly drained, consider using raised beds. A fertile soil with a pH of 5.5–6.5 is optimal. Do not plant raspberries in areas that have been previously planted with raspberries, strawberries, or crops in the Solanaceae family, as diseases can be passed on to the new planting.

**PLANTING:** Adequate spacing is important for best yields. Beds should be 2 feet wide, with paths between the beds a minimum of 8 feet wide. This spacing allows the plants to fill in the bed, and allows room for mowing equipment in the paths.

The paths can be planted with grass or other cover crops, such as clover, or can be mulched with bark or straw. Space plants 18–24 inches apart in the row. Spread the roots laterally from the stem when planting, and cover with ½-1 inch of soil. Water well after planting. Proper soil moisture is important during the establishment year and drip irrigation is recommended. The plants may be slow to form new growth and the existing canes may not develop leaves if proper soil moisture is not maintained. Simply check for root development to ensure that the plants are taking hold. Side dress plants beginning in spring of their second year with 1 pound per 100 square feet of balanced fertilizer, and again in midsummer if needed.

**WEED CONTROL:** Weed control for raspberries is important for best yields and plant health. We recommend that you plant your raspberries in an area that has already been tilled and weeded — preferably an area previously planted with a cover crop for suppression of perennial weeds. After planting, cultivate weekly to control weeds while the raspberries are establishing themselves. Mulching with straw or bark is an effective option for controlling weeds and retaining soil moisture.
PRUNING: Proper pruning is an important part of a successful raspberry harvest. See below for separate information regarding summer-bearing and everbearing raspberry types.

**Summer-bearing types:** Summer-bearing raspberries, also known as floricane raspberries, produce fruit only on second-year canes. In the first growing season after planting, allow the plants to become established, ensuring that the first-year primocanes remain intact through the winter. In the second growing season after planting, any canes that formed in the first year may be pruned at ground level after they fruit and harvest is complete. Thin any new cane growth to 6–8 healthy canes per bedfoot to prevent overcrowding. Continue this pattern in following seasons, removing spent (second-year canes that have fruited), diseased, or broken canes and thinning new canes.

**Everbearing types:** Everbearing raspberries, also known as primocane raspberries, bear a late-season crop on the tops of first-year canes and a main-season crop on second-year canes. If you would like one large late-season crop, prune all canes to the ground after harvest in fall or in early spring. If you would like a moderate main-season and late-season crop, prune as a summer-bearing type.

TRELLISING: A good trellising system can improve yield and ease of harvest. Raspberries can be grown without trellising, but will need to be topped or cut back to prevent canes from breaking. Since many of the fruit buds are on the top half of the cane, topping a plant can reduce the productivity of the planting. Below are recommended trellis systems for the two types of raspberries.

**Summer-bearing (Floricane) types:** Competition from primocanes can be reduced by using a system that separates the fruiting canes from vegetative canes. V-trellising is the most widely used form of trellis for summer raspberries. In a V-trellis system, posts are placed at a 20–30° angle along the outer margins of the planting bed. The tops of the posts should be about 3½ feet off the ground. Wires are then strung along the length of the bed. Fruiting canes are tied to wires on the outside of the V while primocanes are able to grow in the center of the bed. Harvesting and caring for the floricanes is easier because they are more accessible at the edge of the bed.
**Everbearing (Primocane) types:** Primocane fruiting raspberries tend to lean and break due to their top-heavy canes. T-trellises are the most popular form of trellising everbearing raspberries. The posts can be metal or wood, are about 7 feet tall (3½ feet of the post above ground), with a 3 foot cross arm at the top of the posts. The posts are set in holes in the center of the bed, about 25 feet apart in the row. Twine is run between the posts and is attached to either side of the cross bar at the tops of the posts, and canes are corralled within the structure.

**DISEASES AND PESTS:** Raspberries are susceptible to a number of insects and diseases, such as Japanese beetles, spotted wing drosophila, and verticillium wilt. Johnny’s offers a technical sheet titled Raspberry Pests and Diseases. You may request that it be sent to you, or visit the Grower’s Library at our website, Johnnyseeds.com, to view a copy. Contact your local Cooperative Extension Service office or consult a raspberry culture guide for more information.

**HARVEST:** Begin harvesting the second year for summer-fruiting varieties. Everbearing varieties may bear a small crop during their first year, with full yields beginning the second year. Raspberries for fresh eating are almost always harvested by hand, as they do not ripen uniformly enough to machine harvest. Keep berries cool after harvest, and be careful not to crush them. Raspberries are stored easily by freezing whole.
