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## How to Grow Raspberries

If you are looking for something easy to grow and have a little space, Raspberries are for you! Sweet tasting and antioxidant rich, Raspberries grow wild in the woods and along trails in many parts of the country. They successfully compete with a wide variety of weeds in fields and along the edge of the woods.

When you plant a few in your yard or garden, they will easily thrive. With a little care and attention, you will be rewarded with a big and juicy crop!

Did you know? While many growers will buy Raspberries from a garden store, you can dig out small plants from the woods near you (get permission if it's your neighbor's woods). We do suggest you be careful of those poison ivy plants that may be growing next to the Raspberry plants.

**Preparing the Raspberry Patch:** Growing raspberry bushes is easy. Raspberries will grow in poor, dry soils. They will successfully compete against weeds in the woods. But, in the wild, the berries can be small, and the crop sparse. Given a little attention and care, they will do much better in your garden. So...let's grow some big, juicy raspberries. Start out by selecting a sunny location. If your space is limited and you have allotted the sunniest space to your tomatoes, it's ok. A little light shade won't hurt your raspberries.

Next, mix in plenty of humus and rich organic material. Then, add a multi purpose fertilizer. Till the area well, and eliminate all of the weeds. Now you're ready to plant!

**Planting Raspberry Bushes:** Raspberries are usually grown in rows....called hedgerows. Allow about 1 ½ to 2 feet width for the hedgerow. Plant new canes three feet apart. They will send out suckers, and fill in the area in between. Immediately after planting, water thoroughly. Keep the soil moist for a couple of weeks to allow the new plants to develop good roots.

**Care and Maintenance:** Here is one of the great things about raspberries....once your patch is established, you don't need to give it a lot of attention. You should thin out the patch from time to time. Don't let the bushes get too thick. Good air circulation will help to avoid fungus disease. This is a common problem with Raspberries, especially if grown in shadier parts of the garden.

A general purpose fertilizer once or twice a season is also helpful to promote strong, healthy plants and big fruit. Do not over apply. Too much nitrogen can result in bushy plants, but less berries.

Mulch is a useful tool for growing Raspberries. It helps to keep the weeds down. Do not apply too thickly, as new shoots need to be able to get through a layer of mulch.

Raspberries will forgive you if the soil gets a little dry from time to time. But, dry soil during the fruiting period will result in smaller berries.

Raspberries are biennials. They produce fruit on second year canes, called floricanes. After producing fruit, these second year canes will die and should be pruned out. Prune bushes immediately after the harvest season is over. Allow new suckers to grow each year for next year's crop.

**Insects, Pests and Disease:** The most common disease problem with Raspberries is fungus disease. This can be minimized by keeping the hedgerows thinned.

Insects are not a common problem.

The biggest threat to your crop is birds. They love the berries as much as you do! Unless you want to share the crop, we recommend bird netting over the plants during the fruiting period.