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BLUEBERRY GROWING

Pending the publication of up-to-date information on blueberry growing in New York State based on experiments now under way, this mimeographed statement has been prepared to answer some of the questions most frequently asked by those who wish to grow this fruit.

Locating the planting.-- The site chosen for blueberries should have good air circulation which permits cold air to move to lower levels and thus prevent frost pockets. Avoid low areas and areas completely surrounded by trees or shrubs.

Soils for blueberries.-- Blueberries thrive best on loose-textured soils, such as sands, peat and muck. Heavy droughty soils should be avoided, and drainage should be sufficient to prevent the roots from standing in water during the growing season. The soil should be tested for acidity before the plants are set. Blueberries seem to do better on more acid soils than do most crops. Acidity is measured by the pH of the soil, a range of pH 4.4 to 5.0 being best suited to this fruit. The local County Agent is usually prepared to make soil acidity tests or will assist in having them made.

Modifying soils.-- Where soils do not have the desired acidity yet are suitable in other ways for blueberry culture working sulfur into the surface 6 inches of the soil in the following amounts one year before the plants are set is recommended.

Natural Acidity of Soil as tested	Amount of Sulfur per 100 sq. ft. Required to Produce Acidity of pH 4.4	
	Sandy Soil	Loam Soil
pH 5.5 .....	0.8 lbs.	2.4 lbs.
6.0 .....	1.2	3.5
6.5 .....	1.5	4.6
7.0 .....	1.9	5.8
7.5 .....	2.3	6.9

Varieties.-- Among the varieties now available, the following, arranged in order of ripening, are especially recommended for New York: Concord, Stanley, Dixi, Atlantic, Pemberton, and Jersey.

Planting distance.-- The plants should be set in rows 8 to 10 feet apart, with the plants spaced 4 to 5 feet in the row. Early spring planting on well prepared ground is recommended. Sulfur, if needed, should be added a year before planting.

Care of the planting.-- The planting should be kept free from weeds. It should be borne in mind, however, that the feeding roots of blueberries are close to the surface and that extreme care is needed to avoid injury by cultivation. For this reason, mulching is especially recommended in blueberry management. Sawdust has been found to be an efficient mulching material. After the plants are established, the use of fertilizers is important in maintaining vigorous growth. The first year after setting a 5-10-5 fertilizer should be applied at the rate of about 2 ounces to the plant, with the rate increasing as the plants come into full bearing until mature plants receive about  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound of fertilizer each annually. The fertilizer should not be applied closer than 6 inches to the stem of the plant but should be spread in a band around the bush and from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 or 3 feet wide, depending on the size of the plant.

Pruning.-- The fruit is produced on wood of the previous season's growth. Strong shoots from the base of the plant or vigorous laterals from the older canes produce the best berries. Little or no pruning will be required the first two or three years, but after the bushes come into bearing the older branches and low-spreading branches near the ground should be removed. Unless properly pruned blueberries will overbear and produce large quantities of small berries. Pruning is usually done while the bushes are dormant during late winter and early spring.

## PUBLICATIONS ON BLUEBERRIES

The following publications on blueberries are available from the institutions indicated:

1. Blueberry Growing. U. S. Dept. of Agriculture Farmer's Bul. No. 1951. U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. or from your Congressman.
2. Improving the Wild Blueberry. U. S. Dept. of Agriculture Yearbook Separate No. 1585. Supt. of Documents, U. S. Printing Office, Washington, D. C. Five cents.
3. Essentials of Blueberry Culture. Michigan State College Circ. Bul. No. 188. Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich.
4. Blueberry Culture in Massachusetts. Mass. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. No. 317. Mass. State College, Amherst, Mass.
5. Improved Blueberries. N. H. Agr. Exp. Sta. Circ. No. 215. University of New Hampshire, Durham, N. H.

Several circulars on various phases of blueberry growing are also available from the New Jersey Experiment Station at New Brunswick, N. J.

### NURSERYMEN SUPPLYING BLUEBERRIES

Following is a partial list of nurseries supplying named varieties of blueberries. The firms mentioned are regarded as reliable but no guarantee of reliability is implied and no discrimination is intended.

#### New York

George Morse, Williamson, N. Y.

#### Michigan

D. A. Byrd, P. O. Box 126, St. Joseph, Mich.  
Dr. Keefe's Blueberry Plantations, Grand Junction, Mich.  
J. R. Spelman, South Haven, Mich.  
D. W. Wadsworth, Fennville, Mich.  
Harry Wakeman, Bangor, Mich.

#### Maryland

Rayner Brothers, Salisbury, Md.

#### Massachusetts

C. W. Atwater & Son, Agawam, Mass.  
Mrs. L. A. Houston, Hanover, Mass.  
Mrs. Mabelle H. Kelley, East Warcham, Mass.  
Log Cabin Nurseries, Orleans, Mass.

#### New Jersey

Theodore H. Budd, Pemberton, N. J.  
Harold B. Scammell, Toms River, N. J.

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