



RASPBERRY CULTIVARS FOR OREGON

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This publication briefly describes raspberry cultivars. The two main types of raspberries are *red* and *black*. Yellow-fruited raspberries result from a mutation of red raspberries that prevents the formation of red color; they are grown exactly the same as red raspberries. Purple raspberries are a hybrid between black and red raspberries.

Hybrids between blackberry and red raspberry include ‘Logan’, ‘Boysen’, and ‘Tayberry’. These fruits are blackberries, however (the core is part of the fruit) and are included in *Blackberry Cultivars for Oregon* (EC 1617-E).

Red raspberries, *Rubus idaeus*, are native to northern North America and Eurasia. Cultivated red raspberries were introduced into the U.S. as long ago as 1771.

Red raspberries produce new canes from buds on roots and from the crown. In the first year, canes are called primocanes, and in the second year they are called floricanes. Canes are pruned out after their second year. Both primocanes and floricanes are present during the growing season.

There are two types of red raspberries. In *floricane-fruiting* (summer-bearing) red raspberries, the first-year primocanes are vegetative only. The second-year floricanes bear a crop in early summer. *Primocane-fruiting* (fall-bearing) raspberries produce a significant amount of fruit at the top of the primocanes in the fall. It is easiest to cut the primocanes to the ground each winter after fruiting. If you keep them for the second year, however, they will produce a crop on the floricanes the next summer. Because these primocane-fruiting types can be double cropped, they sometimes are called “ever-bearing” raspberries.

Yellow-fruited raspberries result from a genetic mutation of red raspberries. Most are primocane-fruiting types.



Tulameen (floricane-fruiting)

Black raspberries, *Rubus occidentalis*, are native from the Northeast to the Great Plains. The native western black raspberry, or “blackcap,” is *R. leucodermis*.

Black raspberries produce canes only from the crown, not from the roots. Tip the primocanes in summer to encourage branching. The following year, these canes produce fruit.

In the early 1900s, there were dozens of black raspberry cultivars, and new cultivars were released until about the 1960s. Since that time, there has been very little breeding work on black raspberries, and only a handful of cultivars are now commonly available. In the Northwest, nearly all of the commercial crop is ‘Munger’, a cultivar released in 1890.

Purple raspberries are a hybrid between black and red raspberries. They tend to be vigorous, crown-forming plants with large, soft fruit. Purple raspberries generally are considered to have only fair quality for fresh use, but are excellent for processing.

For more information on how to grow raspberries, see *Growing Raspberries in Your Home Garden*, EC 1306, and *Commercial Red Raspberry Production in the Pacific Northwest*, PNW 598.

Cultivar notes

Cultivars are listed in this publication by type: floricane-fruiting (red), primocane-fruiting (red and yellow), black, and purple.

The descriptions are intended to serve only as a guide in choosing a cultivar that's appropriate for your needs. Performance often varies with location.

Note that not all of the listed cultivars are available in nurseries.

Harvest season

Within each type, cultivars are listed in approximate order of ripening.

Disease issues

Many raspberry cultivars are sensitive to phytophthora root rot; this disease is a much greater problem in Oregon and southern Washington than in northern Washington or British Columbia. Generally, cultivars susceptible to phytophthora root rot should not be grown in Oregon unless they are grown on very well-drained soils and on raised beds or ridges (about 12 to 18 inches high) to promote drainage.

Raspberry bushy dwarf virus (RBDV) is a pollen-borne virus (carried by bees) whose primary symptom is crumbly fruit. Usually a raspberry plant infected with RBDV looks normal and is neither bushy nor dwarf. There are no control measures for this virus other than to replant with virus-free stock and/or choose resistant cultivars.

Fruit descriptions and yield

Yield and berry size were measured at the OSU North Willamette Research and Extension Center (Aurora, Oregon). If a cultivar has not been tested at this site, yield and berry size are based on grower experience. Yield ratings are based on comparison to other cultivars of the same type. Red raspberries generally are more productive than black raspberries.

Use

Most berries sold in the fresh market are hand harvested, firm, and bright red and have a shelf life

of several days if properly handled and refrigerated. Those grown for processing are machine harvested and have intense red color and flavor. While firm enough to survive the machine harvesting process, they do not necessarily store for more than a few hours after harvest, although they freeze very well.

Machine harvest

Berries grown for processing generally are machine harvested. For a cultivar to be viable for this market, its fruit must separate easily from the plant when machine harvested and have a high quality for processed markets after machine harvest.

Commercial value

A commercial value score is provided to help commercial growers select appropriate cultivars:

- 1 = Appropriate for most commercial operations for fresh or processed markets
- 2 = May have commercial value but:
 - (a) not enough is known about its performance, *or*
 - (b) may meet a specific requirement (e.g., unique color or very early harvest), but has a negative trait such as low yield or poor shipping quality
- 3 = Unlikely to have good commercial value

Home gardens

Cultivars that are well suited to home garden production are noted as such. However, we advise home gardeners not to grow root rot-susceptible cultivars west of the Cascades, except where there is very good drainage.

Cold hardiness

Cold hardiness is indicated if information is available. Grow only cold-hardy cultivars east of the Cascades. Primocane-fruiting raspberries can be grown in most cold regions if only a primocane crop is produced. Many cultivars are available from eastern U.S. nurseries that might be well adapted to eastern Oregon.

Raspberry canes

Although raspberry plants live many years, their canes are biennial, meaning they live 2 years.

Primocanes: First year of growth. Only fall-fruiting raspberries produce a significant amount of fruit on primocanes in the late summer/fall.

Floricanes: Second year of growth. Both summer-bearing and fall-bearing raspberries produce fruit on floricanes. Fruit is borne on branches called "fruiting laterals." After fruiting, floricanes die.

Table 1. Floricane-fruited (summer-bearing) cultivars: red-fruited

Floricane-fruited raspberries can be grown for fresh or processed markets. Cultivars are listed in approximate order of ripening. The harvest season of ‘Meeker’ starts about June 20 in the Willamette Valley, Oregon. The first pick of ‘Prelude’ averages about 9 days before ‘Meeker’, but 50 percent harvest date (half of yield picked) is about 20 days earlier for ‘Prelude’ than ‘Meeker’.

Cultivar	Disease issues	Plant	Fruit	Yield	Use	Machine harvest	Commercial value	Home garden	Cold hardy
Prelude	Resistant to root rot	Moderate vigor	Small, dull, medium red, soft, good flavor, very early	Low to medium	Fresh		3	●	●
Cascade Dawn	Some tolerance to root rot	Vigorous	Medium to large, medium firm, attractive, bright, dark red, very good flavor	Medium	Fresh		2 (probably will have good commercial value for local fresh markets)	●	
Malahat	Very susceptible to root rot	Vigorous	Medium to large, medium firm, attractive, bright red, very good flavor	Low to medium	Fresh		2 (high quality, low yield)	●	
Willamette	Susceptible to root rot, immune to RBDV	Vigorous	Medium to large, dark red, soft, excellent flavor	Medium	Processed	●	1	●	
Nootka	Susceptible to root rot, resistant to RBDV	Vigorous	Medium to large, bright red, very good flavor, firm	Medium	Processed	●	2 (others are better, but often grown if RBDV is a real concern)		
Chilliwack	Some root rot resistance, susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Medium to large, bright red, firm, attractive, very good flavor	High	Fresh	●	1	●	
Chilcotin	Susceptible to root rot, resistant to RBDV	Vigorous	Medium to large, bright light red, medium firm, attractive, good flavor	Medium to high	Fresh		2 (not outstanding)	●	
Comox	Very susceptible to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Large, bright red, firm, good but acidic flavor	High to very high	Fresh		2 (not outstanding)		
Cowichan	Susceptible to root rot, resistant to RBDV	Very vigorous	Medium to large, bright light red, firm, attractive, fair to good flavor	High	Fresh	●	2 (too new to fully evaluate)		
Qualicum	Susceptible to root rot and RBDV	Vigorous	Large, dull, purple-red, firm, attractive shape, excellent flavor	Medium	Fresh		2 (dull color is not attractive in fresh market)	●	
Canby	Susceptible to root rot and RBDV	Very vigorous	Medium to large, medium firm, attractive, bright red, very good flavor	Low to medium	Fresh		3	●	Moderate

Table 1. Floricane-fruited (summer-bearing) cultivars: red-fruited *(continued)*

Floricane-fruited raspberries can be grown for fresh or processed markets. Cultivars are listed in approximate order of ripening. The harvest season of ‘Meeker’ starts about June 20 in the Willamette Valley, Oregon. The first pick of ‘Prelude’ averages about 9 days before ‘Meeker’, but 50 percent harvest date (half of yield picked) is about 20 days earlier for ‘Prelude’ than ‘Meeker’.

Cultivar	Disease issues	Plant	Fruit	Yield	Use	Machine harvest	Commercial value	Home garden	Cold hardy
Newburgh	Resistant to root rot and RBDV	Vigorous	Medium size, medium red, soft, can be crumbly, good flavor	Low to medium	Fresh		3 (grown only by home gardeners for root rot resistance)	●	●
Latham	Resistant to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Mod-erately vigorous	Small, medium red, crumbly with only fair flavor	Medium	Fresh		3 (grown only by home gardeners for root rot resistance)	●	●
Cascade Nectar	Very susceptible to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Soft, medium to large, dark red, excellent flavor, especially for liqueurs	High	Processed	●	2 (unique market for cordials/liqueurs; plants may be available only for custom orders)		
Cascade Bounty	Excellent resistance to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Medium to large, medium firm, can be a bit lumpy, attractive, bright red, good flavor	High	Fresh or processed	Probably	2 (probably will have good commercial value on wet sites)	●	●
Chemainus	Susceptible to root rot and RBDV	Vigorous	Medium, bright red, firm, very good flavor	Low to medium	Fresh	●	1 (although fairly new, this cultivar has been widely planted)	●	
Saanich	Susceptible to root rot and RBDV	Vigorous	Medium size, dull red, good firmness, good flavor	Medium	Processed	●	1 (although fairly new, this cultivar has been widely planted)		
Meeker	Somewhat sensitive to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Medium size, medium firm, medium red, good flavor	Medium to high	Processed	●	1 (the most popular raspberry for processing in the Northwest)	●	
Tulameen	Very susceptible to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Large to very large, firm, bright red, very attractive, excellent flavor	Medium	Fresh		3 (although this is the most popular raspberry for fresh market worldwide where root rot is not a problem or where grown in a greenhouse)	●	

Table 1. Floricane-fruiting (summer-bearing) cultivars: red-fruited *(continued)*

Floricane-fruiting raspberries can be grown for fresh or processed markets. Cultivars are listed in approximate order of ripening. The harvest season of ‘Meeker’ starts about June 20 in the Willamette Valley, Oregon. The first pick of ‘Prelude’ averages about 9 days before ‘Meeker’, but 50 percent harvest date (half of yield picked) is about 20 days earlier for ‘Prelude’ than ‘Meeker’.

Cultivar	Disease issues	Plant	Fruit	Yield	Use	Machine harvest	Commercial value	Home garden	Cold hardy
Cascade Delight	Tolerant to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Very vigorous	Very large, very firm, attractive, excellent flavor, bright red	Medium to high	Fresh		2 (too new to fully evaluate but looks like a winner)	●	
Lewis	Somewhat tolerant to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Large, bright red, very good flavor, firm	Medium to high	Fresh		2 (plants difficult to obtain)		
Esquimalt	Very susceptible to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Very vigorous	Large to very large, bright deep red, firm, very good flavor	High to very high	Fresh	Not recommended after limited testing	2 (too new to fully evaluate but looks very promising)	●	
Coho	Susceptible to root rot	Vigorous	Large, bright red, excellent flavor, firm attractive	High to very high	Fresh and processed	●	1 (although fairly new, this cultivar has been widely planted)	●	



Coho

Table 2. Primocane-fruiting (fall-bearing) cultivars: red- and yellow-fruited

All primocane-fruiting raspberries are grown primarily for fresh market and are hand harvested. Cultivars are listed in approximate order of ripening. The fruiting season for the primocane crop of 'Heritage' starts around August 20 in the Willamette Valley; 'Autumn Bliss' is about 2 weeks earlier. Yield and cold hardiness evaluation are based on primocane crop only.

Cultivar	Disease issues	Plant	Fruit	Yield	Commercial value	Home garden	Cold hardy
Autumn Bliss	Good resistance to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Moderate vigor	Large, medium red, moderate firmness, mild flavor, attractive	Medium	2 (early season, poorer quality but higher yield than 'Autumn Britten')	●	●
Autumn Britten	Susceptible to RBDV	Moderate to good vigor	Large, bright red, moderate firmness, mild flavor, attractive	Low to medium	2 (early season, better quality but lower yield than 'Autumn Bliss')	●	●
Chinook	Tolerant to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Moderate vigor	Large to very large, bright to medium red, firm, mild flavor, attractive but rounded	Medium to high	2 (hard to pick)	●	●
Amity	Susceptible to RBDV	Moderate vigor	Small to medium, medium firmness, bright red, very good flavor, attractive	Medium	2 (early harvest, excellent flavor, but small fruit)	●	●
Summit and Golden Summit	Tolerant to root rot, susceptible to RBDV	Moderate vigor	Large, bright to medium red, firm, mild flavor, round, attractive. 'Golden Summit' is a yellow-fruited form.	Medium to high	1 (early season)	●	●
Anne	Susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Large, bright yellow, moderate firmness, excellent flavor, attractive	Medium to high	1 (may be the best choice of the yellow-fruited types)	●	●
Caroline	Some root rot resistance, susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Large, medium red, attractive, moderate firmness, good flavor	High	1 (although fairly new, it is widely planted)	●	●
Fallgold	Susceptible to RBDV	Moderate vigor	Medium size, soft, gold color, excellent flavor	Medium	3 (too soft)	●	●
Heritage	Some tolerance to RBDV	Vigorous	Medium size, bright red, firm, bland, attractive; late, so short fruiting season in cold climates	High	1	●	●
Kiwigold and Goldie	Some tolerance to RBDV		These are sports of 'Heritage' and differ only in fruit color. 'Kiwigold' is yellow or apricot yellow. 'Goldie' typically is a deep apricot color.	High	1	●	●
Josephine	Susceptible to RBDV	Vigorous	Large, bright red, moderate firmness, good flavor, attractive; late, so short fruiting season in cold climates	Medium to high	1	●	●

Table 3. Black raspberry

Most black raspberry cultivars are very similar in growth and fruit characteristics. All except 'MacBlack', which is late-fruiting, fruit nearly simultaneously from late June to early July in the Portland area. Most are quite susceptible to phytophthora root rot.

Cultivar	Plant	Fruit	Yield	Use	Machine harvest	Commercial value	Home garden	Cold hardy
Bristol	Vigorous	Small to medium, black, good firmness	Low to medium	Fresh or processed	●	2 (but nothing outstanding to distinguish it from other cultivars)		
Jewel	Vigorous	Medium to large, black, good firmness, excellent flavor	Low to medium	Fresh	●	1	●	●
Munger	Vigorous	Medium size, black, fair firmness, very good flavor	Medium	Processed	●	1	●	
Cumberland	Moderately vigorous	Medium to large, black, fair firmness, very good flavor	Medium	Fresh and processed	Probably	2	●	
MacBlack	Vigorous	Medium to large, black, good firmness, good flavor; ripens 10 to 14 days later than most other cultivars	Low to medium	Fresh	●	2 (unique for late season)	●	



Table 4. Purple raspberry

Purple raspberries generally start fruiting a bit later than floricane-fruiting red raspberries.

Cultivar	Plant	Fruit	Yield	Use	Commercial value	Home garden	Cold hardy
Brandywine	Vigorous	Large to very large, soft, purple, excellent flavor	High to very high	Local fresh market or processed	2 (need to develop a market, as there is no wholesale market)	●	●
Royalty	Vigorous	Large to very large, soft, purple, excellent flavor	High	Local fresh market or processed	2 (need to develop a market, as there is no wholesale market)	●	●

What if you find a cultivar that's not on these lists?

Find out some of the plant growth and fruit characteristics:

- Is it a summer-bearing or fall-bearing type?
- Does the nursery's description indicate that it's susceptible to any diseases, such as root rot or viruses?
- What's the fruit like?
- Is it machine-harvestable (for commercial growers)?

Remember: If you purchase a cultivar that's not on these lists, it probably hasn't been extensively tested in Oregon. It's best to try a few plants first; see if they grow well and if you like the fruit.

For more information

Commercial Red Raspberry Production in the Pacific Northwest, PNW 598 (2007)

Growing Raspberries in Your Home Garden, EC 1306 (revised 2007)

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