



FACEBOOK LIVE SEMINAR

Berry Bush Bonanza: Tips and Tricks for Growing Your Own Berries

INTRO TO GROWING BERRIES

Berries are a delicious addition to any garden. They are packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants and can be eaten fresh, frozen, or used in a variety of recipes. There are many different types of berries you can grow, including strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, and more. Each type of berry has its own unique flavor and growing requirements.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT VARIETY

Before you start growing your own berries, it's important to choose the right variety. Some varieties are better suited to certain climates, soil types, and growing conditions. Consider the following factors when choosing a berry variety:

- **Climate:** Different varieties thrive in different climates. Make sure to choose a variety that is well-suited to your local climate. All berries grow beautifully in USDA zones 7-8 here in Hampton Roads.
- **Soil:** Berries prefer well-drained, fertile soil. If your soil is not ideal, consider adding pur McDonald Garden Center compost or other soil amendments to improve its quality and acidity.
- **Space:** Some berry varieties are more compact than others. Make sure to choose a variety that will fit in the space you have available.

PLANTING AND CARE

Once you've chosen the right berry variety, it's time to start planting. Here are some tips for planting and caring for your berry bushes:

- **Planting:** Berries should be planted in early spring or late fall. Make sure to plant them in a sunny location with well-draining soil.
- **Watering:** Berries need consistent moisture to thrive, especially when they are first planted. Water them regularly, especially during dry spells and summer heat.
- **Feeding:** Berries benefit from regular feedings as they grow. Use a balanced organic plant food to promote healthy growth and eventually, more berries!
- **Pruning:** Pruning is important for maintaining the health and productivity of your berry bushes. Prune them in late winter or early spring to remove dead or damaged wood.

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HARVESTING AND STORAGE

When it's time to harvest your berries, make sure to pick them at the right time. Each type of berry has its own ripening schedule, so pay attention to the color and texture of the fruit to determine when it's ready to be picked.

Here are some tips for harvesting and storing your berries:

- Harvesting: Berries should be harvested when they are fully ripe. Gently twist the fruit from the stem to avoid damaging the bush.
- Here is the timeline you'll see berries ripening at in Hampton Roads:
 - Strawberries: May-June
 - Blackberries: Mid-Late June
 - Blueberries: May-June
 - Raspberries: Late June
- Storing: Berries can be stored in the refrigerator for several days. If you have a lot of berries, consider freezing them for later use.

Growing your own berries can be a rewarding and enjoyable experience. By following these tips and tricks, you'll be able to grow delectable berries in your own backyard. Remember to choose the right variety, plant and care for your berry bushes properly, and harvest and store your berries at the right time.

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