

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing Blueberries

Fresh blueberries are a summer staple in many gardener's homes. Fresh blueberries can be used for jams, making muffins or eating raw.

To plant:

Plant blueberry bushes as early in the spring as possible. It is easiest to plant blueberry plants that are already 1 to 3 years old. Plant them in a sunny spot, although blueberries will tolerate some shade. Soil pH should be between 4 and 5, as blueberries thrive in acidic soil. Their root system is shallow, so be sure to plant in soil that holds moisture but also drains well. Plant the bushes in holes 20 inches deep and 18 inches wide. Set the bushes 5 feet apart in rows, and set the rows 8 feet apart. Prior to planting, prepare a mixture of two parts loam and one part peat moss, oak leaf mold, compost or aged sawdust to coat the bottom of the hole. When planting the bush, make sure its roots are spread out in the hole and then pack the hole tightly with soil. Blueberry bushes also can grow well in containers.

To grow:

Blueberries are popular amongst birds, so add a protective cage around the plants. Mulch the plants to keep the root systems moist and deter weeds. Blueberries require at least 1 to 2 inches of water per week. For newly set plants, younger than 3 years old, pinch back any blossoms that will develop into fruit because you do not want the plant to produce fruit in its first two years of life. Pruning will be required to stimulate blueberry growth after the plant's first four years of life. Prune in the late winter or early



[Bluecrop Blueberry plants available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

spring. To do so, cut out dead, broken, short or weak shoots. For lowbush blueberries, cut all stems to ground level. Because pruned plants won't bear fruit the season after pruning, it is suggested to only prune half a patch of blueberry plants at a time.

To harvest:

Harvest blueberries in late July or early August. Once berries turn blue, wait a few days and then pick them. When the berries are ready to pick, it shouldn't be difficult to pull them from the stem. Blueberries freeze easily after harvest, and then they can be consumed for months.

What blueberries crave:

Apply fertilizer for the first time one month after planting, using ½ ounce of a 10-10-10 fertilizer applied about 6 inches from the crown of the plant.

One year after planting, apply 1 ounce of 10-10-10 fertilizer per blueberry bush in the



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spring around blooming time. Increase that rate by 1 ounce per year to a maximum of 8 ounces.

Where to buy blueberry plants:

Urban Farmer offers different types of blueberry plants that are easy to care for and produce delicious fruits!

Check out our Blueberry plant selection on our website at ufseeds.com!



[Jersey Blueberry plants available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



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