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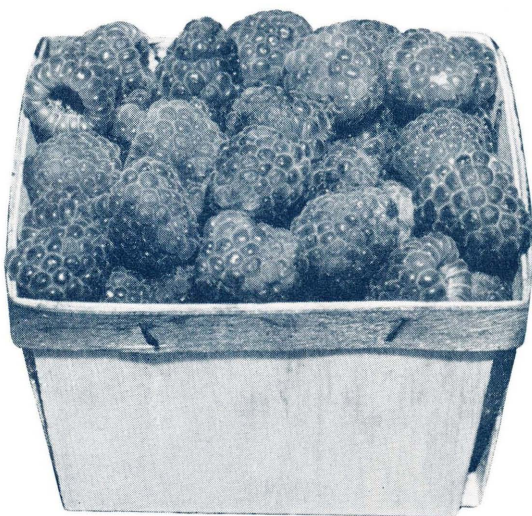
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Practical Hints on Raspberry Growing
Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service
F Folder Series
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Revised May 1947
5 pages

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Practical Hints
on
Raspberry Growing



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MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE
EXTENSION SERVICE
EAST LANSING

Michigan State College and U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. R. J. Baldwin, Director, Extension Service. Printed and distributed under acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914.

PRACTICAL HINTS ON RASPBERRY GROWING

Raspberries generally are well adapted to the climate and soils of Michigan. They may be grown in home gardens in virtually all parts of the state. In many localities plantings are extensive enough to make the raspberry one of the most important commercial crops.

Anyone interested in growing small fruits should give these brambles careful consideration. They come into bearing early. A fair yield is usually obtained the second year and a full crop the third season. The berries ripen when there is comparatively little else in the way of fresh fruit on the Michigan market.

Raspberries may often be used to good advantage in conjunction with local market vegetable growing enterprises. They are also well suited for use as intercrops in young orchards. In the home garden, 24 plants (12 red and 12 black) or a 100-foot row will produce enough fruit to supply an average family. In larger gardens 200 feet or more of row may be desirable to allow a succession of varieties and to produce enough fruit for canning and other culinary uses.

The life of a planting of red raspberries will average from 8 to 10 years; that of a black or purple planting 5 to 7 years. Good management may enable growers to extend the productive life of favorably located plantings.

SELECTING THE SITE

Raspberries are subject to injury both from winter freezing and late spring frosts. Because of this fact the land selected should be high enough or have sufficient slope to assure good air drainage. Avoid planting in pockets or on low land. The canes are more subject to winter injury in such locations.

The Soil—Raspberries can be grown on any moderately fertile *well-drained* loam soil. A moist sandy loam, well supplied with humus, is best. Light sands lack fertility and they dry out quickly. The plants seldom thrive on heavy clay.

The characteristics of the subsoil are more important than those of the surface layer. It should be sufficiently open or porous to permit good water drainage and yet retain considerable moisture.

The moisture supply is very important. Although good drainage is necessary, the plants will not do well unless they have an ample and continuous supply of moisture. This fact should be kept in mind when the site is being selected.

VARIETIES

Latham is the most popular red variety. It is extensively grown for market use. The berries are large, firm, and attractive in appearance, but inferior in quality.

Chief is a good early variety. The plants are resistant to disease and are productive. The berries are smaller than those of Latham but better in quality.

Taylor is especially recommended, both for home and market use. The berries are large, firm and of good quality. It is one of the best for canning and freezing.

Milton is a promising new variety.

Indian Summer is the best fall-bearing red variety.

Cumberland is the leading black raspberry. *New Logan* ripens about one week earlier. *Morrison* is good.

Sodus is the best purple variety.

PLANTS AND PLANTING

Preparing the Soil — A cultivated crop should be grown on the land for at least one year preceding the planting of raspberries. If the soil is deficient in humus, a liberal amount of organic matter in the form of manure or green manure crops should be plowed under the year before or in the fall before the planting is done. In the final preparation, the land should be plowed deeply and thoroughly worked into a fine and mellow condition.

Plants — Use only the best plants obtainable. They should be well grown, carefully handled, and free from injurious insects and diseases.

Those from young plantings are usually more healthy and vigorous.

Do not use plants from any field that has not been inspected and rogued for crown-gall and virus diseases.

Even the best plants will not withstand heat or rough handling. They should be kept cool and moist and set in the field as soon as received. If this is impossible, the bundles should be opened and the plants "heeled in" in moist soil at once.

Time of Planting — Red raspberries may be successfully planted either in late fall or early spring.

Spring planting is the usual practice. This should be done as early as the soil can be properly prepared.

Fall planting may be done during late September and in October.

Black and purple varieties should always be planted in the spring.

Distance of Planting — The distance between plants and rows depends on the kind of tillage implements used and the system of culture which is to be followed.

When grown in hills, the plants are set 5 or 6 feet apart each way and the land cultivated in both directions. This system requires less hand work, but the yields obtained are relatively low.

The hedgerow system is the most popular for red raspberries. The plants are set about 3 feet apart in rows 6 to 10 feet apart, depending on the method of cultivation. Sucker plants are allowed to form a more or less solid and continuous row. The yields obtained when this system is used usually are larger than when other methods of training are employed.

The linear system is commonly used in growing purple and black raspberries. The plants are set 4 feet apart in rows 7 to 9 feet apart. Red raspberries are occasionally trained in this way, but as a rule this system is not so satisfactory as the hedge-row.

Setting the Plants — The tops should be cut back to a height of 6 inches or less, before or immediately after planting.

Protect the plants from sun and wind to prevent drying.

Set plants in a furrow or in holes large enough to hold the roots without crowding.

To prevent smothering the young shoots, plants of black and purple varieties should be set in the bottom of the hole or furrow and covered with not more than 2 inches of soil. Fill in later by cultivation as the new shoots grow above ground.

Pack the soil firmly around the roots.

CULTIVATION AND MULCHING

Cultivation should begin soon after the plants are set and in established plantations as early in the spring as conditions permit. Shallow cultivation (not deeper than 3 or 4 inches) is best. Repeat often enough to control weeds until the beginning of the harvest season. After harvest, cultivate once or twice to loosen the soil packed in the harvesting operations.

Cover Crops — At the time of the last cultivation, a cover crop of oats or some similar annual crop that dies during the winter may be sown between the rows. This crop is worked into the soil at the time of the first cultivation in the spring.

Mulching — In the home garden and in small commercial plantings, a mulch of straw, strawy manure or other suitable material may be applied to take the place of cultivation. Hardwood sawdust may be used. The mulch should be deep enough to smother grass and weeds. It should be replenished each spring. When straw or sawdust are used some nitrogen fertilizer should be added.

FERTILIZERS

Farm manures are the best fertilizers for raspberries. Poultry and rabbit manure may be used. Apply during the winter or early in the spring.

Commercial fertilizers may be beneficial. If the soil is well supplied with humus and the moisture supply is right, they probably will not be needed. When cane growth is not satisfactory, an attempt should be made to correct unfavorable soil conditions and eliminate diseases before resorting to the use of fertilizers.

A nitrogenous fertilizer, such as ammonium sulfate or ammonium nitrate, is most likely to be beneficial. Apply in early spring at the rate of 150 to 200 pounds per acre, or about 5 pounds for each 100 feet of row.

PRUNING

Raspberries are borne on canes that develop the previous year from buds which are formed on roots or at the base of the old canes. The bearing canes die soon after the fruit ripens. The plants should be pruned according to the directions outlined below:

A — **During June or later**, pinch or cut off the ends of young shoots of black raspberries when they reach a height of 2 feet (purple raspberries, 2½ feet). This practice is not recommended for red raspberries.

B — **After harvest**, cut out and burn all old canes which have borne fruit immediately after the last berries have been picked.

Remove all suckers of red raspberries outside of the hill or row.

C — **In the spring**, during March or April,

1. Remove old canes, if any have been left.
2. Remove weak and badly diseased canes.
3. Thin remaining canes if necessary. Leave about 6 canes in each hill of black or purple raspberries, 7 to 9 canes in each hill of red raspberries, and not more than 3 or 4 canes to each lineal foot of hedgerow.
4. Shorten side branches of black and purple raspberries to 6 or 8 inches in length; straight unbranched canes to about 3 feet. Shorten main canes of red raspberries to about 4 feet in height; side branches, if any, to 10 or 12 inches. If the canes are 4 feet or less in height, remove only winter-injured tips.

PROGRAM FOR INSECT AND DISEASE CONTROL

1. When starting new plantings, use only plants which are as disease free as it is possible to obtain.
2. Remove and burn all "handles" or portions of the old cane from black and purple raspberry tip plants before planting.
3. Remove and burn old fruiting canes immediately after harvest.
4. Remove and burn all portions of canes injured by tree crickets, borers, or other cane insects when pruning in the spring.
5. Spray every spring when the buds show green with liquid lime-sulfur, 1 gallon in 8 gallons (one pint to one gallon) of water.
6. If leaf-eating insects appear early in the season, spray with lead arsenate; if later, when fruit is well formed, use rotenone or pyrethrum sprays.
7. Dig and burn immediately, when found, all plants affected with such diseases as curl, mosaic, and orange rust.