

Blueberries : Great Fruit, Great Plant!

Blueberries have now become one of the most popular of all the small fruits. With the health craze for high antioxidant fruits, the blueberry stands at the top of the list. The fruits are consumed fresh as well as made into many dessert dishes. The bush itself is fairly easy to grow if you follow just a few easy tips. First of all, you will need an area that has at least half day of sun and well-drained soil. Blueberries require a very acidic soil and like a pH around 4.5 to do well. You can acidify your soil by adding sphagnum peat moss and aluminum sulfate. Fertilize plants on a regular basis during the growing season to promote maximum growth. Use a slow release fertilizer such as Holly Tone for best results.

Pollination in blueberry plants is best achieved by using two different varieties. There are basically two types of blueberries grown in this area. The Rabbit Eye which are smaller type berries similar to wild blueberries and then the High Bush blueberry which is much larger in size and similar to what store-bought berries look like. If you are thinking about planting, there are several good varieties from which to choose. Bluecrop and Blueray are still among the most popular followed by some newer introductions such as Duke, Climax and Premiere. Remember, for best results plant at least two different varieties.

The next added benefit for the blueberry plant is its beauty in the landscape. The plant itself is upright and add good privacy for screening of decks and patios. The foliage on these plants in the Fall is absolutely incredible. Vivid colors that will change from a bright red to deep burgundy provide interesting changes in landscape. This is one plant that is good for you and also good for the landscape. Enjoy the garden!

Mark