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Berry Varieties for Ontario

Reviewed by Ontario Berry Crops Variety Trials Committee Dec 10, 2004

All varieties have strengths and weaknesses, which make them more or less suitable for certain sites. Before choosing a variety consider location, soil type and intended market. Varieties have been grouped according to their suitability for general planting, limited or trial planting.

General Planting - Well-known varieties of proven performance and market value. Grow well in most locations but not necessarily the best variety for all locations.

Limited/Regional Planting - These varieties have value but should be limited in extent of planting. Some may have proven valuable in trial plantings and warrant further commercial experience. Others may be adapted to a specific region or be useful only for selected markets.

Trial Planting - These are promising, newer varieties for Ontario which require further testing to establish their commercial value.

Blueberry varieties

- For general planting: Bluecrop
- For limited planting: Bluejay, Blueray, Duke, Elliot, Jersey, Patriot
- For small trial plantings: Aurora, Bluegold, Draper, Liberty, Northblue, Reka

Raspberry varieties, fall bearing

- For general planting: Autumn Britten, Polana
- For limited planting: Heritage**
- For small trial plantings: Caroline**, Anne (yellow-fruited)

** Southwestern regions only

Raspberry varieties, summer bearing

- For general planting: Boyne
- For limited planting: Killarney, Nova, Reveille, Royalty (red-purple), Titan*
- For small trial plantings: Canby, Cowichan, Encore, Jewel (black raspberry), Prelude, Qualicum**, Tulameen

*Extremely susceptible to *Phytophthora* root rot and/or crown gall. Should only be grown from tissue-cultured plants on raised beds.

** Southwestern regions only

Strawberry varieties, June bearing

- For general planting, pick-your-own and retail markets: Annapolis, Jewel
- For general plantings, pick-your-own: Cavendish, Honeoye, Kent, Veestar
- For limited planting: Brunswick, Cabot, Glooscap, Governor Simcoe, Mira, Sapphire
- For small trial plantings: Evangeline, Harmonie, L'Authentique Orleans, Ovation, Sable, Serenity, St. Pierre, Yamaska

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For additional detail see:

Variety descriptions: Strawberry:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/strawvar.htm>

Variety descriptions: Raspberry

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/raspvarc.htm>

This list is updated annually. For updates, and for recommendations on other small fruit varieties, see: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/berryrec.htm>

Best Management Practices For Nutrient Management In Berry Crops

By Pam Fisher, Berry Crop Specialist, Donna Speranzini,, Nutrient Management Program Lead, OMAF , and Anne Verhallen, Soil Management Specialist

The following best management practices include some common crop production practices and some newer ones. As research progresses, we hope to learn how to fine tune new production systems, in order to capture nutrients get more from each dollar spent on nitrogen, and maintain or improve fruit quality.

Account for nutrients applied in manure:

Manure is more than a great source of organic matter, it contains nutrients that should be subtracted from your commercial fertilizer rate. How do you know the nutrient levels in manure? General values are given in OMAF Publication #360, page 31. A more accurate way to find out is to send a sample of the manure to a soil testing lab for analysis.

Spring or late fall manure application:

In berry crops, use manure in the pre-plant or planting year, but, for food safety reasons, not in the harvesting years. In the pre-plant or planting years, apply manure in the spring, or late fall (mid November). Avoid early fall and winter applications when more nitrogen can be lost by leaching. See “Late Fall Applications of Manure”

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/tenderfr/tf090210.htm>

Manage pre-plant rates of nitrogen carefully

Strawberry plants do not begin to take up nitrogen from the soil until approximately 3 weeks after planting. A single pre-plant application of nitrogen is convenient but may not be as efficient as a split application, or post-plant side dress applications.

Irrigate only to replace soil moisture

Advances in technology have made it easier to monitor soil moisture levels and adjust for changes in crop growth and weather patterns. See “Monitoring Soil Moisture” on the OMAF website at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/allontario/ao1103a1.htm>

Multiple nitrogen applications

Blueberry growers apply nitrogen in a 3-way split between green tip and early July, to coincide with plant uptake. Research is needed to improve the efficiency of nitrogen applications in raspberries, particularly fall bearing raspberries, which we suspect would benefit from split applications.

Fertigation

Trickle irrigation systems provide a method for applying fertilizers, in small and frequent doses. Although more research is needed, we expect that the overall nitrogen rate can be reduced when using trickle irrigation systems, because fertilizer can be placed only the rooting zone of the plant and not between the rows.

Cover crops

Cover crops can do more than just cover the soil and protect it from erosion. Planted in the year prior to berry establishment, they add vital organic matter to soil which helps to maintain soil structure. Cover crops can also pick up nitrogen from the soil and prevent nitrogen losses.

For more information on cover crops see

http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/cover_crops01/covercrops.htm