

NC Cooperative Extension- Caldwell Center 2022 Edible Plant Sale

NC STATE EXTENSION

Tips and Considerations

Site Selection

Proper site selection is critical in growing healthy, productive plants. All plants offered produce best in full sun. Blueberries are the most shade tolerant of the fruit plants available, and will produce acceptable yields in 50% shade.

Good air circulation will help in reducing disease outbreaks. Plant all plants well away from buildings and tall trees. Avoid low-lying areas, or frost pockets, in order to protect spring blossoms.

Good drainage is essential for all fruit plants. If you have poorly drained soil and wish to grow fruit plants, create raised beds by mounding up the soil or by using some type of construction material for the sides. Beds need to be at least 12 inches deep.

Soil Testing

Once you select the site, take a soil sample and submit it to NCDA-Agronomic Division for analysis. Test results will provide advice on the amount of lime and nutrients needed. Most fruit plants perform best at a pH of 6.0, except blueberries, which need a slightly more acidic soil.

It is important to incorporate lime and nutrients into the soil at the time of planting. Information on soil testing, forms, and boxes can be obtained from the Caldwell Center office. Soil testing is completely free if the samples are sent in to the lab between April and November. Samples received between December and March will be assessed a \$4 fee per sample.

Pollination

Blueberries require more than one variety for good fruit set. Order at least two varieties of blueberries for best results.

Summary: We advise that once you have selected a site for your new plants, you take a soil sample to have tested for nutrients and pH as soon as possible.

The Caldwell Center provides quality small fruit and vegetable plants; however, we cannot reimburse for any plants that do not survive after leaving the Extension Center.

BLUEBERRIES

\$8.00 each

18-24 inches tall, container plants

Blueberries require a well-drained soil with abundant organic matter and a pH of 4.5 to 5.8. They will bear well in full sun to light shade. A few inches of mulch helps reduce water stress. Under good conditions, plants produce in abundance. The following varieties produce best when at least two different varieties are planted together. Plant 6' apart.

<i>Varieties</i>	<i>Ripens</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Fruit Characteristics</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Powderblue	Mid-Late	Medium	Good flavor, very light color	Long season, no cracking; highly productive; rabbiteye type; 1-gallon container
Climax	Early	Med-Lg	Very good flavor; medium color	Upright; concentric ripening; medium color; rabbiteye type; 1-gallon container
Tifblue	Early-Mid	Med-Lg	Good flavor, light color	Standard variety; productive; berries hold well; rabbiteye type; 1-gallon container

STRAWBERRIES

\$8.00 / 25 plants

1 yr. old, bare root plants

Strawberries are easy to grow and are typically grown as a matted row. Strawberries perform best with a soil pH of 6.5 to 6.8. June bearing types bear fruit in the spring of the second year and every spring after that. Everbearing types should bear fruit in the first year.

<i>Varieties</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Season</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Chandler	June bearing	Early	Great for fresh eating, jams, and freezing; vigorous grower
Eversweet	Everbearing	Late	Large, sweet strawberries throughout spring, summer and fall. Especially tasty, bright-red cone-shaped berries can be enjoyed fresh or frozen
Ozark Beauty	Everbearing	Late	Fresh eating, canning, making strawberry jam or strawberry jelly, freezing

BLACKBERRIES

\$8.00 each

1 yr. old plants, bare root plants

Blackberries are among the easiest fruits to grow. They tolerate most soils but do best at a pH of 6.5 to 6.8. Plants need full sun to produce flowers and fruit. Trailing blackberry varieties require trellising, while erect types do not.

<i>Varieties</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Season</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Triple Crown	Trailing; thornless; floricanne-fruiting	Late	Medium to large fruit with a distinct sweet flavor; long harvest season; vigorous grower; fruit does not store well.
Prime Ark 45	Erect; has thorns; primocane-fruiting;	Late	Firm, medium to large fruit that holds well; light harvest first fall; bears in either summer or fall depending on how plant is managed.
Natchez	Erect; thornless; floricanne-fruiting	Early-Mid	Very large, elongate fruit; good disease resistance.

MUSCADINES

bare root plants

\$8.00 each

Avoided shaded areas. Fruit set and production will be reduced if the vines are shaded for more than several hours each day during the growing season. Muscadine grapes will survive and produce a crop on a wide range of soils as long as drainage is good. Plant failure can be expected in locations where water stands for even a short period after heavy rains. Apply and work in dolomitic lime at the recommended rate by the soil test to bring the pH to 6.5 before planting.

<i>Varieties</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Carlos (bronze)	It is a bronze self-fertile and contains 16% sugar. The Carlos muscadine vine is very vigorous, yielding large amounts of quality, medium size fruit.
Noble (black)	The Noble muscadine vine is a black self-fertile variety that produces medium size fruit with good quality and large clusters.

PAWPAW TREES

\$20.00 each

bare root whips

Produces large tropical custard-like fruit that is oblong in shape and has a light green skin. Enjoy the pleasant aroma when it ripens. Texture is firm with delicate blend of flavors. Many describe the fruit as an intense banana pudding with a hint of mango flavor.

<i>Varieties</i>	<i>Fruit Characteristics</i>	<i>Comments</i>
All-in-One	Produces large tropical custard-like fruit which begins to ripen in late summer and peaks in September and October.	Pawpaw trees grow best in fertile, well drained, slightly acidic soil(pH 5.5-7). Plan to provide ample water to pawpaw trees, especially during the establishment year.

FIGS

\$15.00 each

2-3 ft. tall trees, bare root plants

Figs are as close as it gets to a fruit you can plant and forget. They prefer a moisture retentive, well-drained soil, and full sun. Incorporate plenty of compost and mulch deeply. Figs are self-fertile. Space 10 feet apart.

<i>Varieties</i>	<i>Ripens</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Fruit Characteristics</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Brown Turkey	July - Aug	Small-Med	Light coppery brown skin with amber pulp	Productive plant; fruits on new growth; good fresh or canned
Celeste	Mid July	Small-Med	Violet or light brown skin with strawberry pulp	Ripens over a long period; good fresh, canned or preserved

RHUBARB

\$6.00 each

bare root crowns

Rhubarb produces edible, scarlet stems with a tart flavor. Often combined with sweet fruit in recipes, like strawberry rhubarb pie.

<i>Varieties</i>	<i>Ripens</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Victoria	Summer	Large, tender stalks	Vigorous, upright grower; some root rot resistance

For More Information:

When deciding which fruit plants to grow in your home garden be sure to think about the following:

- ✓ Do you have an appropriate site – full sun, well-drained soil?
- ✓ Maintenance requirements: pest management; training and pruning requirements; irrigation.
- ✓ Do you have space for plants to mature?
- ✓ What is your soils pH? Do you need to add lime or nutrients? Have you done a soil test?

For more information consult the following publications online, or stop by the Caldwell County Center of the NC Cooperative Extension Service located at 120 Hospital Ave., Suite 1, Lenoir to pick up a copy.

Horticulture Information Leaflets

[Muscadine Grapes in the Home Garden](#)

[Growing Blueberries in the Home Garden](#)

[Blackberries for the Home Garden](#)

[Pruning and Training Blackberries](#)

[Strawberries for the Home Garden](#)

Extension Bulletins

[Grapes and Berries for the Garden](#)

[Training and Pruning Fruit Trees](#)

[A Gardeners Guide to Soil Testing](#)