

Recipe: Berry Bread Pudding

Serving Size: 1 cup; Yield: 2 servings; Calories per Serving 180

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups blue berries
4 - 5 slices whole wheat bread - crusts removed
1/2 teaspoon sugar (optional)*
yogurt, lowfat vanilla (optional)

Instructions:

1. Combine the thawed berries and sugar (if you choose to use the sugar). Layer a spoonful of berries on the bottom of a small 2 cup deep dish. Cover the berries and the bottom of the dish with a layer of bread. Spoon in most of the berries. Add another layer of bread and continue until the dish is full, finish off with a layer of bread.
2. Cover the dish with plastic wrap and place a plate or bowl over the top of the berry dish that fits just inside of it. Place a heavy object on top to press down on the fruit and bread layers. Refrigerate overnight. (Check the dish to be sure juice does not run over the top. You may need to replace the heavy object with a lighter one to prevent spills.)
3. Serve with a dollop of vanilla yogurt or a sprinkle of powdered sugar.

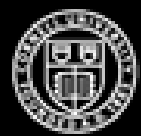
Source: Senior Nutrition Awareness Project (SNAP) Newsletters, University of Connecticut Family Nutrition Program

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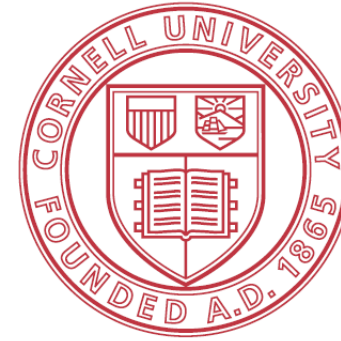
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Fruit Growing Guide: Blueberries

Cornell Cooperative Extension Clinton and Essex Counties

Blueberry Facts



Recommended Varieties:

- Northblue
- Northcountry
- Northland
- Northsky
- Blueray
- Patriot

Blueberries and their cousin their cranberry, are the only commercially produced fruit crops that are native to North America. Blueberries like full sun, well drained soil, and good air circulation. The wild lowbush blueberry, *Vaccinium angustifolium* usually grows no more than 15 inches tall. The cultivated blueberry is from cultivars developed from the northern highbush blueberry, *Vaccinium corymbosum*. In addition to producing fruit, the red stems of the highbush varieties add to the winter landscape. Not all blueberry cultivars are hardy to zones 3 and 4. Some cultivars for northern New York are Northblue, Northcountry, Northland, Northsky, Blueray, and Patriot. Blueberries can self-pollinate, but you can increase berry size and total harvest if you plant 2 varieties.

How to Plant

Begin by testing your soil. Blueberries like acidic soil. Soil pH must be 4.5-5.0. If your pH is close to this range, the pH can be further reduced with garden sulfur. If the pH is much higher, a small area can be prepared for the plants by digging up the existing soil and replacing it with soil of the proper pH. In either case, this should be done the growing season prior to planting. Besides proper pH, blueberries prefer sandy soil amended with organic material.



Purchase plants that are at least 2-3 years old from a reliable nursery. One-year old plants have a high mortality rate. Either bare-root or container grown plants can be

purchased. If your purchase bare-root plants, soak the roots in water for several hours before planting. Root-bound container grown plants should have their roots pruned prior to planting. Space plants 4 feet apart within rows and 10 feet between rows. Set plants 1 inch deeper than they were grown in the nursery and prune to half their original size.

Pests and Diseases

Birds are the biggest problem. Use netting or pick the berries while they are slightly tart. Birds prefer the sweeter berries. Blueberries have fewer pest problems than other fruits. A few diseases to watch for are the Fusicoccum canker (small reddish spots on the canes and plant parts above the canker die), phomopsis (single canes suddenly die), mummyberry (young shoots and leaves wilt and die), stem galls (oblong swellings at the tips of canes). Prune out and destroy all injured and diseased plant parts.



Maintenance and Care

Remove any flowers that appear the first year to promote vegetative growth. Keep plants well watered, especially during the first two years. Do not fertilize until the plants flower during the spring of the second year after transplanting. Sprinkle 4 ounces of ammonium sulfate or 2 ounces of urea in a ring around the base of each plant. Don't work it into the soil. You might damage the shallow roots. In mid to late summer mulch with sawdust, woodchips, chopped cornstalks, or pine needles. In early spring remove stems injured during the winter. In late fall, after the leaves fall off, remove the large canes to increase fruit production. Canes that are 1/2-1 inch thick at their bases are the most productive. Ideally the blueberry bush should have at most 16 canes.



Harvest and Storage

As the berries ripen their flavor sweetens. If left on the bush, berries do not spoil for at least one week. Once picked, berries should be stored in a cool location to maximize shelf life. Blueberries can also be preserved by freezing them. Pick over 2 cups of blueberries and put them in a quart sized zipper lock freezer bag. Add 1/3 cup sugar. The sugar reduces the formation of damaging ice crystals when freezing fruit and it protects the flavor. Remove as much air as possible and seal. Place bag into a second zipper-lock bag and lay bags flat in a single layer on a baking sheet. Freeze until solid, at least 24 hours, then store anywhere in the freezer.

Sources:

Information for the text was taken from the 2003 Cornell Guide to Growing Fruit at Home which can be found at www.gardening.cornell.edu/fruit/homefruit.html

Recipe was provided by Eat Smart New York. More information on this program can be obtained by calling your county's Cornell Cooperative Extension Office.