

Raspberry

Grow

Raspberries are fruits which grow on woody stems called canes. Canes are biennial, lasting up to two years. The underground root and crown of the raspberry plant are perennial. Each spring, the plants produce canes from buds on the crown and lateral underground stems.¹⁻³

Fun Fact: Raspberries are sometimes called caneberries. Historically, growers have called raspberries brambles.¹

Raspberries belong to the genus *Rubus*, which is part of the *Rosaceae*, or rose, family.¹⁻³ They can be found growing from the Arctic to the equator.³ Raspberries thrive in cooler weather and prefer sustained lower winter temperatures - ideal for growers in mountain and western regions of North Carolina. Raspberries prefer deep, well drained loamy soil. They need full sun and adequate soil moisture. Space red raspberry plants 2-3 feet apart and rows 10-12 feet apart.³⁻⁴

Fun Fact: Raspberries can be red, yellow, orange, purple or black.^{1-4,5}

Cultivated raspberries have been derived mainly from two species, the wild red raspberry and black raspberry. The purple raspberry is a cross between the black and red raspberries. The yellow type is a mutant red raspberry. Raspberries are unique in that the fruit separates from the receptacle yielding a hollow core.¹

Fun Fact: Raspberry plants can live for up to 10 years.⁴

Choose

Select raspberries that are fully ripe, but not overly so. Raspberries should be dry, firm, and plump. Watch out for soft, mushy, leaky or moldy berries. The appearance of raspberries can range from dull and dark to bright and shiny. In the United States, raspberries are harvested from May through November. Popular U.S. varieties are Amity, Heritage, Meeker, Sweet Briar, and Willamette. Popular N.C. cultivars include Apache, Arapaho, Kiowa, Nantahala, Natchez, and Ouchita.^{4,6}



Store

Raspberries are highly perishable and should be picked or purchased one or two days prior to use. Once harvested or purchased, they should be stored in the refrigerator. Before storing, remove any raspberries that are molded so they will not spoil other berries in the container.⁶

Fun Fact: Over two hundred species of raspberries have been identified.³

Use

The majority of raspberries grown in the United States are processed as individually quick frozen raspberries, frozen raspberry puree, or frozen raspberry juice concentrate. A smaller percentage of the crop is sold fresh for markets in the U.S. and abroad.⁶⁻⁷

Raspberries are a very delicate fruit

Handle raspberries with care to prevent damage. Do not wash raspberries until ready to use. When ready to use, wash gently and pat dry with single use paper towel. Raspberries freeze well. Lay them out in a single layer on a flat pan or baking sheet and place them in the freezer. Once frozen, put them in a freezer safe container or a plastic resealable bag. Raspberries are great on their own or mixed in oatmeal, cereal, yogurt or a salad. They are also tasty made into a puree or sauce. There are so many ways to serve and enjoy raspberries!⁶⁻⁷

Raspberry

Teach

Raspberry plants consist of several different parts: roots, canes, stems, thorns, leaves and fruit. Roots crown beneath the soil surface and provide a support system for the plant. Shoots, called canes, grow from buds on the crown and lateral stems. Canes can be thornless or thorny. Serrated, veiny leaves grow on raspberry stems. Drupelets, the fruit, grow around a fleshy core called a receptacle and are held together by tiny hairs. When picked, the fruit detaches from the receptacle.^{1-4,7}

Class Activity - Examining Raspberries

Materials Needed:

- Paper, colored pens or pencils, computer or tablet
- Different colored raspberries

Steps: *Use food safety steps. Wash hands and produce.

1. Discuss the parts of the raspberry plant with the class.
2. Discuss the varieties of raspberries. Allow students to examine the different colored raspberries.
3. Ask students draw and label the parts of the raspberry plant. A computer can also be used to draw the fruit.

Fun Fact: Raspberries are not really a berry. They are an aggregate fruit. A raspberry is made up of many connecting, individual sections of fruit, each with its own seed that surrounds a central core. The aggregate structure increases the fiber content of the raspberry.^{1,4}

Class Activity - Berry Books

Materials Needed:

Storybooks such as:

Berries, Nuts and Seeds by Diane L. Burn

The Berry Book by Gail Gibbons

Jamberry by Bruce Degen

Raspberries by Jay O'Callahan and Will Moses

Steps:

1. Read and discuss the storybooks as a class.
2. Ask students to share their experiences with growing, picking and/or eating raspberries.
3. Brainstorm other books about berries.

Eat

Sweet and Nutritious

Raspberries are an excellent source of fiber (32% of the Daily Value) and vitamin C (40% of the Daily Value). A cup of fresh raspberries has about 64 calories, 8 grams of fiber and 32 mg of vitamin C. They are free of cholesterol and low in fat and sodium.^{4,5-10}

Fun Fact: Raspberries are one of the top ten fruits and vegetables with the highest antioxidant rating!⁸

Soluble fiber can help lower cholesterol. Insoluble fiber aids digestion. Vitamin C helps form collagen to hold muscles, bones and tissues together, protects us from infections and bruising, aids in healing, keeps our gums healthy, helps our body absorb iron and folate from plants, and acts as an antioxidant to prevent cell damage. Raspberries offer a variety of phytochemicals—flavonoids, ellagic acid, lutein, etc. Phytochemicals act as antioxidants preventing or repairing cell damage. Anthocyanidins, a flavonoid sub-group, contribute to the blue, red and purple pigments of fruits. Anthocyanidins may also help with maintaining brain and healthy immune function. Ellagic acid helps neutralize free radicals that may damage cells and boost antioxidant defenses in cells. Lutein may help maintain healthy vision.^{4,7-8,10}

Find

For more raspberry facts and resources, visit:

1. North Carolina Raspberry & Blackberry Association, www.raspberrylblackberry.com
2. University of Maine, <https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/2066e>
3. Illinois Extension, <https://extension.illinois.edu/>
4. N.C. State Extension, www.ces.ncsu.edu
5. Produce for Better Health Foundation, <https://fruitsandveggies.org>
6. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, www.fns.usda.gov
7. Oregon Raspberries & Blackberries, www.oregon-berries.com
8. Washington Red Raspberry Commission, www.red-raspberry.org
9. USDA Food Composition Databases, <http://ndb.nal.usda.gov>
10. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, www.eatright.org