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May 1904
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BLUEBERRIES



Questions

and

Answers



HOUSTON ORCHARDS



HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

Cultivated Blueberries

Recently when exhibiting our blueberries at one of the large New England fairs we noticed that the interest shown in this new addition to our small fruits was most marked; that a great number of people wanted much more information on the subject than has been given by short radio talks, or in the one or two small leaflets that have been sent out by out-of-state growers. Always the same questions were asked by those seeking for light upon this most interesting subject. We wrote down those questions, and in this little booklet we will make the replies cover very thoroughly the subject of blueberry culture as it applies to the ordinary grower of a limited number of plants, or to the commercial grower who wishes to plant on a larger scale. The principles are the same in both cases.

Question 1. What are cultivated blueberries? Are they wild blueberry bushes that were taken from the woods or swamps, brought into the garden, fertilized and cultivated?

Ans. Cultivated blueberries are a *development* from the original wild stock. The work of improving the wild blueberry has been going on for the past 25 years. Carried on, as it has been, by leading Horticultural experts

❖ BEAUTIFUL PLANTS ❖

in the experimental grounds of the United State Department of Agriculture, the Cultivated Blueberry may well lay claim to the distinction of governmental approval.

As the methods used in the improvement of fruits and flowers are the secret of those who make it their life work, we cannot give more than a hint to those who would like to know how the work is done.

Planting seed from the finest fruit; cross pollination; selection of choice seedlings; hybridization. This is what we heard as we "listened in." The word "*patience*" was used very often. The result is a decided achievement.

Question 2. Are the plants offered for sale the same as those raised at the experimental stations?

Ans. Yes, all plants that are offered for sale by reputable growers or nurseries are propagated from the varieties released by the original experimenters, in such a manner that they are positively true to name.

Question 3. Can they be grown from seed?

Ans. No. They are not propagated in that manner. We cannot recall any fruit that is grown from seed, with the exception of wild fruit.



CLEAN FRUIT



Question 4. How high do they grow?

Ans. Blueberry plants will attain a height of 6 to 7 feet or over, but will give best results if held down to a height of 6 feet.

However, in some sections plants have been known to grow to a height of 14 feet.

Question 5. Are they shapely? Is there much pruning to do?

Ans. Indeed yes. Blueberry plants are in themselves very shapely, and when given proper care and trimming they make a very ornamental shrub. The amount of pruning will depend upon the variety. Both the Cabot and the Pioneer are inclined to overbear, and the timely removal of all undeveloped or weak branches will prove most beneficial to the plant.

Question 6. Do blueberry plants require spraying?

Ans. So far, during the fifteen years that we have grown these plants for their fruit, we have not sprayed them. The blueberry is the cleanest fruit that we have any knowledge of.



HEAVY BEARERS



Question 7. How much fruit will they bear?

Ans. A well developed blueberry bush should bear about 6 quarts of choice fruit, under favorable conditions. In very dry weather the yield will be somewhat less; in favorable years it has been higher on mature bushes. A good yield per acre is something like 3200 quarts, more in wet seasons, less in dry.

Question 8. What kind of soil is best for blueberries?

Ans. Blueberries like moist soil that is naturally acid and free from rock; neither too sandy nor too heavy with clay. The soil must be loose, not crusty. If it is too heavy, sand will improve it. If lacking in humus, peat moss, or rotted leaf mold will give it body. Any soil that will grow strawberries or a crop of garden vegetables will be exactly right for blueberries.

Question 9. How far apart should they be planted?

Ans. Plant blueberries in rows 8 ft. apart for field planting, with plants 4 ft. apart in the rows. Where only a few plants are to be considered, plant any place in the home grounds where you can find room for them. For Clumps



on the lawn plant 4 ft. apart. Keep the same distance between them in shrub borders. For hedges or divisions inside your grounds they may be planted 3 ft. apart.

Question 10. When is the best time to plant?

Ans. Spring is the best time to plant almost anything. If fall is more convenient, use that time to plant this most hardy and robust fruit. For fall planting be sure to bring the earth well up around the plant. This will protect the root system and prevent it from heaving during the winter.

Question 11. What kind of fertilizer gives the best results?

Ans. Up to this time good results have been obtained by the formula given on page 11 of this booklet. Apply only a generous pinch around the plant in the spring. Keep it away from the plant to prevent burning. This is all the fertilizer necessary to keep the soil in good condition. A mulch of oak leaves or peat moss is excellent if you have only a few plants.

Question 12. How about the flavor, are they as good as the wild berry?

Ans. A great many people consider this



A HARDY PLANT



new fruit far superior in flavor to the wild berry. Our several varieties all yield large berries, and our pickers cannot decide which of them is the best in flavor. All are firm, very blue, meaty, and have been known to keep without sweating or withering for at least three weeks. This fact should be of interest to commercial growers, as the berries can be shipped great distances without deterioration.

Question 13. Are they a hardy plant?

Ans. Yes. Blueberries are extremely hardy. In our own fields they have withstood a temperature of 30 degrees below zero, without being in any way damaged. Not a single plant perished during the cold winter of 1933-1934.

Question 14. How long do they live?

Ans. Blueberry plants are long lived, and barring accidents, will probably outlive us all. One man tells of a bush that he has been picking for over forty years, and it is still a heavy bearer.

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When less was known about this most interesting plant, much doubt was cast upon its possibilities. It was thought that only bogs,

waste lands, and swamps were suitable for its growth. Hence, the ordinary interested grower was discouraged, and did not plant when he could, and should, have done so. Now we know that blueberries will thrive almost anywhere in our home grounds if treated like other shrubs and bushes, or fruit trees.

A Beautiful Plant

PLANT THEM AND GIVE THEM A CHANCE. In a few years they will be the queens of your home garden.

Grow them for their beauty; grow them for their wonderful crops of fine fruit. Do not consider the first cost. They are a self-supporting shrub; the only one that pays its way year after year with a minimum of attention.

So beautiful are these new shrubs all through the year that one wonders how any other show bush can be compared with them. In the spring they are a veritable drift of creamy bloom, which is followed in midsummer by clusters and spikes of great berries of the bluest blue, unmatched for their luscious flavor. Then with the approach of the first frosts, their leaves take on handsome colors of rich carmine reds and coppery golds that last long after all other shrubs have been denuded of their foliage.

❖ NEW GARDEN ARISTOCRATS ❖

Finally, when the garden lies half buried in snow, a clump of blueberry bushes with their pretty red and gold twigs will present a most intriguing patch of misty color just when it is most needed.

Landscape architects will tell you that blueberries have always been more or less useful in landscape work. When they see the new Cultivated Blueberries at fruiting time, and sense their advantages and possibilities their enthusiasm knows no bounds.

Of exceptional interest to them is one variety that shapes itself like a dome. Loaded with fruit its beauty is a revelation. In time this shrub will attain a height of 6 feet, with a dense top. Another variety grows to a height of approximately 7 feet. This one if trimmed back to a height of 6 feet will thicken to a diameter of about 6 feet, and the trimming will encourage a heavier inner crop of fruit, that makes it most valuable as a garden ornament. This is the only variety that grows its fruit on the fine inside twigs. Consult us when your plantings are to be for landscape purposes; we wish to recommend the best varieties for your needs.

To sum up—Cultivated Blueberries are the long awaited answer to the demand for better, bigger, finer blueberries, that can be picked under modern sanitary conditions.

❖ A LANDSCAPE PLANT ❖

They are the gift supreme of the horticultural scientist to our gardens. Let us accept the gift and enjoy it.

Description of Varieties

CABOT: Grows to a height of 4½ ft.; dense flat top, very ornamental. Berries delicious, very sweet, clear blue color. Early bearer.

PIONEER: Grows to 5 feet; loose branches like a lilac; large slightly flattened berries in elongated clusters; a good cropper, delicious, and good blue color. Comes into bearing after Cabot.

RUBEL: Late bearer, will attain a height of 7 feet if allowed its own way; should be kept to 6 feet to facilitate picking; bears large quantities of very fine slightly acid berries; the best commercial variety so far developed.

CONCORD: JERSEY: Growing habit very much like Pioneer; berries largest of any so far developed, but neither have been found to be heavy bearers. We have a limited number on hand and will include one of either kind in home garden lots if they are specified; otherwise our selection will be of our three leading varieties, Rubel, Pioneer and Cabot.



SIZABLE BERRIES



Remarks on Planting

Plant in any sunny spot. Plant in rows or in clumps on the lawn. A hedge of blueberries would be an engaging sight.

In the border they would be very fine, or as shrubs about the house.

Caution: While it is true that hardy plants may be planted in any part of the country and thrive, the same cannot be said of plants that are transplanted from the more southerly states into our colder climate. We recommend our hardy New England grown plants for our own section of the country to avoid disappointment and loss.

Cultivation: Blueberry roots are distributed just under the surface of the soil. For this reason cultivation should be very shallow, not over two inches deep, so as to leave roots undisturbed.

Keep witch grass and other weeds away from your plants. Witch grass harbors white grubs that feed on berry roots, and weeds will absorb the moisture needed by your plants.

Do not use lime on soil intended for blueberries, lime will sweeten the soil and make it unfit for this purpose. Do not use barnyard manure on your plants, any litter of this nature causes fungus disease, and is best avoided.

Planting directions and pruning will accom-

❖ A STURDY PLANT ❖

pany every shipment of plants. There is nothing at all difficult about the culture of Blueberries provided the soil is suitable, and some attention is given to them in the matter of pruning out the weak branches, and keeping them clear of weeds and brush.

They will not need pruning for the first few years after planting. When we refer to pruning, we refer to half grown or older bushes that are apt to get dense and overbear, thus producing an inferior size of fruit. Blueberries grow very fast when once started. In our own fields and nursery rows, the plants have a most sturdy and thrifty appearance, some of the new shoots attaining a height of 4 ft. in a season. These shoots when ripened off in the fall of the year are sometimes a full half inch in diameter. It is from this nursery that all our orders are filled.

We have been complimented again and again on the thrifty and clean condition of our plants, and we guarantee satisfaction so far as any guarantee can be given on the finest stock grown anywhere.

In conclusion, we wish to point out that these new *improved* blueberries are HARD WOODED plants like Azaleas, and as difficult to propagate. They will never be overdone because they can never be cheaper than they are now. Our prices are quoted for wide distribution. We invite correspondence.

❖ A PROFITABLE PLANT ❖

Fertilizer Formula

Mix the following together for best results:

25 lbs. Nitrate of Soda

65 lbs. Ground Rock Phosphate, (or Super
Phosphate)

10 lbs. Sulphate of Potash

100 lbs.

Keep left over fertilizer in a tin container.
Mark it, and use it the next year.

Packing

All plants come to you Balled and Burlapped with soil on their roots.

Plants are sold in sets of three, or 25 assorted plants.

Terms: 25% with order. Balance on delivery at our nursery. All plants shipped F. O. B. Hanover, Mass.

WHOLESALE: Nurserymen who wish plants for their customers, or commercial growers, please write us for particulars.

HOUSTON ORCHARDS

Blueberry Nursery

HANOVER, MASS.



WHERE THEY ARE . . .

Those Great Big Delicious Blueberries

That Gardeners Are Talking So Much About

FINE, HEALTHY FIELD GROWN PLANTS

BEST VARIETIES:

RUBEL

PIONEER

CABOT

at

GROWERS' PRICES

We recommend either fall or spring planting. Blueberry plants do well either way when some protection is given when planted late in the season. For fall planting do *not* remove canvas covering, and treat like tender roses, by mulching with pine needles or other light litter to the depth of several inches.

CAUTION: Do *NOT* use barnyard litter of any kind. Plant same as you would any other shrub; use only good brown loam to fill in around the ball of roots; water copiously from time to time; they will reward you for the care you give them.

On all orders of 25 plants or over, please write us a few days in advance, as all our plants are dug up to order in the case of large quantities.

Add 10c to your check or money order for a year's supply of fertilizer on orders of 10 plants or under, this will save you the bother of getting it the first year.

PLEASE NOTE:

Blueberry Plants are always sold (in sets of three) for purposes of cross polination.

Come for your plants if possible, as blueberries are hard to pack, and we cannot afford at these wholesale

prices to handle orders of less than \$3.50 if they are to be packed and expressed.

The plants on this list will vary between 12" to 18" tall, and root systems weigh approximately 2½ and 5 lbs. when balled and burlapped. We send out only fine thrifty stock, sure to grow.

For this year we are offering home garden lots of choice well assorted plants, as follows:

10—2 yr. old bushes, 10-12", wgt. 2½ lbs.	\$5.50
6—2 yr. old bushes, same as above	3.50
10—3 yr. old bushes, 18" tall, wgt. 5 lbs.	8.50
6—3 yr. old bushes, same as above	5.00
3—3 yr. old (larger set)	3.50

3—4 yr. old budded bushes — just coming into bearing	\$5.00
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QUANTITY PRICES

2 yr. old bushes	\$50.00 for 100
3 yr. old bushes	80.00 for 100

All Prices are F. O. B. Hanover, Mass.

Let Us Hear From You

HOUSTON ORCHARDS

Blueberry Nurseries

HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

