

Raspberry Varieties for the Inland Northwest & Intermountain West

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Raspberries come in four colors, black purple, red, and yellow. Black raspberries typically sucker little and grow in distinct hills or clumps. The fruit is smaller and seedier than red raspberries, and is used primarily for preserves and pastries. Black raspberries are the least cold hardy of the four types, and begin suffering damage at temperatures around -10 F.

Red raspberries are derived from a different species than blacks, and tolerate temperatures to -25 (some cultivars are less hardy). They are used fresh and for juice, preserves, and pastries. Yellow or golden raspberries are the same species as red raspberries, differing primarily in color. Yellow raspberries typically contain more sugar and less acid than red cultivars, making them ideal for eating out-of-hand. They are soft, however, making them difficult to ship long distances. Their color and lack of acid make yellow raspberries less than desirable for cooking.

Purple raspberries are hybrids between red and black parents. They are very vigorous and nearly as cold hardy as red cultivars. In trials at Sandpoint, they tolerated temperatures of -20 with no damage. The fruit is often irregular in shape and the color rather muddy. The flavor is different than red raspberries, only fair for fresh use but excellent for preserves. Most purple cultivars resemble their black parents and grow in hills. The cultivar Royalty resembles the red parents, as well, and can be used at either the red or purple stages of ripeness.

Raspberries are further classified as summer-bearing or fall-bearing (everbearing). All black and purple cultivars are summer-bearing. They produce single crops of fruit that ripen in early to mid summer. Red and yellow raspberries can be either summer-bearing or fall-bearing. Fall-bearing cultivars actually produce two crops each year. Primocanes which arise as suckers in the spring develop flowers in mid summer and bear fruit at the tops of the canes in late summer or early fall. The tops of the canes then die. If the remainder of the cane is left, fruit will develop in the middle section the following summer, at the same time summer-bearing cultivars fruit. Alternatively, fall-bearing raspberries can be cut off about one inch above the ground in early spring before new growth starts. The canes then bear a single crop in the fall. The advantage of this method is that pruning labor is reduced.

Black Raspberries

Expected yield: 2.5 to 3 pounds per hill

Hardiness: -5° to -10° F

Plant spacing: 3 feet apart in rows 8 to 10 feet apart

Cultivar	Cold Hardiness (degrees F)	Fruit Characteristics					Disease Resistance	
		Ripens	Size	Flavor	Fresh Use	Cooking	Root Rot	Spur Blight
Allen	-10	1	L	G	G	G	4	3
Blackhawk	-15	1	M	F	F	F	4	3
Bristol	-10	1	M	F	F	F	4	3
Cumberland	-5	1	L	G	G	G	4	3
Haut	-15	1	M	E	E	E	4	3
Munger	-15	1	L	E	E	E	4	3

Purple Raspberries

Expected yield: 3 to 4 pounds per hill
Hardiness: -15° to -20° F
Plant spacing: 3 feet apart in rows 8 to 10 feet apart

Cultivar	Cold Hardiness (degrees F)	Fruit Characteristics					Disease Resistance	
		Ripens	Size	Flavor	Fresh Use	Cooking	Root Rot	Spur Blight

Red Raspberries

Expected yield: 2 to 3 pounds per hil

Hardiness: -20° to -25° F

Plant spacing:

Summer-bearing: 2 to 3 feet apart in rows 8 to 10 feet apart

Fall-bearing: 2 feet apart in rows 10 feet apart

Summer-Bearing Red Raspberries

Cultivar	Cold Hardiness (degrees F)	Fruit Characteristics					Disease Resistance	
		Ripens	Size	Flavor	Fresh Use	Cooking	Root Rot	

Amber	-25	1,3	M	E	E	P	3	2
Fall Gold	-25	1,3	M	E	E	P	3	2

Ripen only - mid summer, 2