



## Raspberry Fact Sheet

Without a doubt raspberries picked fresh taste so much better than anything you can buy from the supermarket. To grow them well at home follow these few ideas taken from well-known Queensland gardener – Jerry Colby Williams. In our climate I think you are better to plant in a spot with some protection from the western sun and wind. They do not like to totally dry out and if they do when fruiting the fruit will be quite small. Water well in summer and apply an organic mulch each year to help retain moisture and stifle the competition from weeds. As they have a somewhat delicate root system avoid cultivating around the plants too much.

There are quite a **few cultivars** available so if you grow early, mid and late season cropping cultivars, you can have fruit from summer through to late autumn. Always buy certified disease-free stock as this will help to prevent pests and diseases. There are yellow-fruited, mild-flavoured cultivars such as Golden as well as richly flavoured, raspberry-coloured fruit such as Chillwack, Autumn Bliss, Heritage and Willamette. Well cared for plants can remain productive for over 30 years.



### How to plant

If you are planning to grow them there are a few things you need to know. Raspberries are suckering cane producing plants that need to have a well prepared garden bed. Extra time spent preparing the soil will make all the difference. Add extra compost and manure and fertilise with a complete fertiliser each spring. A pH of about 6.5- 7.5 is ideal. Plant in autumn or winter in rows facing north to south, as this ensures the plants receive even sunlight. To support the raspberry canes, attach two or three horizontal wires to lattice, a fence or firmly anchored posts. Raspberry canes need support and without this trellis growth will tend to snap and break in even light winds. (see page 2)



### **Ongoing care and maintenance**

Raspberries fruit on canes produced the previous season, which look exhausted when they have finished fruiting. Prune this old growth at ground level and tie in fresh, vigorous new canes, which will flower and fruit the following season. Tie shoots in and off the ground, and remove dead or weak shoots any-time. Mulch with well-rotted compost in autumn and with lucerne or sugar cane in spring. Feed the developing fruit with a flower and fruit fertiliser and of course water well in hot or windy weather.

### **Some other things to consider**

Birds love raspberries, so protect fruit using 4cm-squared netting. Unlike smaller netting, this saves fruit without trapping or injuring birds or snakes. Hand weed carefully. New suckers and surface-feeding roots are fragile. Keep mulch away from the base of stems. This reduces fungal diseases. Botrytis, a fungus affecting foliage and fruit, can be a problem in warm, moist autumns. Spray with organic approved copper-based fungicide. Extreme heat and sunshine may spoil fruit. Cover with 25 per cent shade cloth or old net curtains. Try to plant about 10 canes for each Raspberry lover in the house.

**Are they hard to grow?** Not really if you follow these ideas you should be able to produce a decent amount of fruit every year.



Reference – Jerry Colby Williams – Gardening Australia 2008.