

OUT OF THE BOX

BLUEBERRY

Your plants are shipped in grower's pots and should be transplanted into larger pots or into the ground as soon as is convenient. Once planted they may take 4-6 weeks, depending upon the weather and other environmental conditions, to become established and start showing new growth. You can be assured they will begin setting roots and start growing very soon after planting. Please plant as soon as possible, provide reasonable care, and be patient.



We urge you to plant your new arrivals as soon as possible. In the event planting must be delayed due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances, roll the plastic bag that is around the plant down and place in or near a bright window. Also, keep the soil in the pots moist. These are small pots that may need to be watered at least every other day.

The foliage on potted plants may appear wilted or yellow upon receipt. This is nothing to worry about. Water the plant thoroughly then gently remove any foliage that doesn't "perk up".

The blueberries listed in this guide do not require two different cultivars for cross-pollination in order to produce fruit. However, bigger berries and higher yield will result from cross-pollination.

It is very important to test the pH of your soil prior to planting as blueberries prefer a very acidic soil. The soil pH should be in the range of 4 to 5. If soil pH is above 5, apply 1-2 lbs. per 100 sq. ft. of granular sulfur to lower soil pH. Make sure to mix it well throughout the top 4 to 6 inches of soil as early as three months or longer before planting.

Most blueberries must experience a frost in order to set fruit; however, we offer the *Sunshine Blue* variety for those of you living in climates that do not experience a winter frost.

\*Image on cover is representative of the type of plant(s) in this offer and not necessarily indicative of actual size or color for the included variety.

*Thank you for your order*

BLUEBERRY

PLANT WARRANTY

We warrant perennials for 1 year and annuals for 90 days from the time of the original shipment. If for any reason you are dissatisfied, we will replace your plant with a similar or comparable one, at no charge. If your replacement is not available or it is too late in the season to ship, it will reship the following shipping season.

**CAUTION:** Not all plant material is edible.

Though most plants are harmless, some contain toxic substances which can cause headaches, nausea, dizziness, or other discomforts. As a general rule, only known food products should be eaten. In case of ingestion, please contact your local poison control center at once and advise them of the plant ingested.

Keep out of reach of children.



## QUICK REFERENCE PLANTING GUIDE

LIGHT/SUN EXPOSURE	Full to partial sun.
USDA HARDINESS ZONES	<b>Sunshine Blue:</b> 5 to 9. <b>Chandler:</b> 4 to 7. <b>Pink Lemonade:</b> 3 to 7. <b>Patriot:</b> 3 to 7. <b>Top Hat:</b> 3 to 7.
PLANT TYPE	Perennial/Edible.
PLANTING DISTANCE IN-GROUND	4 to 5 feet apart.
CONTAINER SIZE	One plant per 12-inch or larger container. Transplant into larger container as needed.
MATURE HEIGHT / SPREAD	<b>Sunshine Blue:</b> 3 to 4 feet. <b>Chandler:</b> 5 to 6 feet. <b>Pink Lemonade:</b> 4 to 5 feet tall. <b>Patriot:</b> 3 to 5 feet tall. <b>Top Hat:</b> 2 to 3 feet tall.
BLOOM TIME	Early to mid-summer, with fruit set beginning the 2nd year.

## SOIL PREPARATION

Blueberries perform best in acidic soil. We recommend regular applications of a water soluble fertilizer for Acid Loving Plants in order to both create the proper acidic (low pH) environment, and to boost the amount of nutrients available to the plant. It is a good idea to have your soil tested periodically by your local County Extension Office ([www.csrees.usda.gov/extension](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/extension) or by calling 1-800-333-4636). These tests can determine if the soil needs any amendments to enhance your plants' growth and performance. See below for our recommended practice to improve your soil without any additional testing:

1	Spade or till the soil to a depth of 12-18 inches.
2	To provide nutrients and improve drainage, add organic matter to your soil by mixing in a 2 to 4-inch layer of dehydrated manure, garden compost, shredded leaves, and/or peat moss.
3	After active growth begins, periodically feed with a water soluble fertilizer for Acid Loving Plants. Plants in containers need more frequent watering and feeding, especially when in active growth and bloom.

## PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

**Important:** Thoroughly rehydrate the plant and its surrounding soil before planting so it may properly adapt to its new location. We recommend submersing the root zone of the plant in a container of water for 2-3 minutes while you prepare for planting.

1. Remove and discard the clear plastic bag from around the plant.
2. After watering, separate the root ball from its pot by holding the plant upside down in one hand and gently squeezing the sides of the pot with the other. Do not yank on the stem; the plant should easily slide out of the pot with just slight pulling.
3. Prepare the root ball for planting by gently disturbing the roots with your fingers, fork, or gardening tool. Loosen any roots that have begun winding around the soil ball and prune any rotted or damaged roots. This will encourage the roots to begin growing outward into the new soil.
4. Dig a hole twice as wide and twice as deep as the plant's root ball. Partially backfill the hole with soil and place the plant into the hole. The top of the root ball should be level with the ground surrounding the hole. Refill the hole with soil, firming the soil around the plant with your fingers. Check to be sure the plant is not planted too deeply. If it is, raise the plant carefully and refirm the soil.
5. Water thoroughly.

## CONTINUING CARE

Adequate and consistent watering is essential during the plant's first year in your garden. Infrequent, long soakings of water that thoroughly saturate the soil surrounding the root zone are more effective than frequent light applications of water that just wet the top of the soil.

Due to individual plant needs, geographical and environmental conditions, a specific watering schedule is hard to define; however as a rule of thumb you should not allow the soil to completely dry out. During periods of drought and extreme summer heat, you may need to water as often as every day.

Overwatering can be as damaging as under watering. Be sure that the area surrounding your plant does not become a water-holding bog and that there is adequate drainage to move excess water away from the plant.

## CONTINUING CARE (Continued)

### PRUNING

Blueberry plants normally do not need pruning for the first three years. During the first and second years after planting you should remove any blossoms that appear in order to help stimulate vigorous growth. Allow the blossoms to mature into fruit during the third year.

During mid-March of the fourth year, prune your bushes while they are still dormant. Remove dead and weak branches as well as any thin, terminal wood with small buds. Prune interior crossing branches to permit light to reach the center of the plants.

In the following years, thin out older branches in order to force new growth. Flower buds of blueberry bushes are produced on tips and down the stems of two-year old wood. Blueberry bushes tend to produce smaller berries when they are overloaded with fruits. It is important to not have too many flower buds so the plant may produce better fruit.

### FEEDING

Feed your plants once every 2-3 weeks during the growing season with a water soluble fertilizer for Acid Loving Plants. Discontinue feeding after September 1st so your plants can harden off for winter dormancy. Resume fertilizing when new growth appears in the spring.

Blueberries require at least 800 chill hours (chill hours = temperatures below 45°) in order to set fruit the following spring. With the exception of Sunshine Blue.

### WINTERIZING

A thorough watering in late fall will greatly enhance the plant's cold tolerance.

The time to protect your plants in the garden is after the ground has frozen. At that time, apply a winter mulch of evergreen boughs, straws or leaves to prevent lifting of the plant's roots during alternating periods of freezing and thawing.

For container planting, move plants next to your home's southern foundation for added warmth and protection. They may also be moved into an unheated, protected area such as a garage or cellar that still allow for the plant to attain the necessary chill hours. If moved to a protected area, be sure to check the soil moisture every 7-10 days and water as needed.

In spring, remove the mulch from in-ground plantings and prune off any dead wood. Also, bring containerized plants back out into the garden sunlight where they will immediately begin to repeat their yearly garden performance.