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## Enjoy Raspberries in the Fall

By Susan Pelton, UConn Home & Garden Education Center

Early autumn is such a great time in New England. We get to visit apple orchards and pumpkin fields, walk through corn mazes and go on hay rides. We snack on popcorn and apple cider, pick apples and pumpkins to cook into pies and butters and just marvel in the wonderful colors of the changing leaves. One of my favorite things about this time of year is the fall raspberry crop. It is something that we continue to look forward to every fall. A few years ago I picked up some raspberry canes from the North Central Conservation District Plant and Seedling sale (more about that at the end of this article) and they have established themselves nicely.



In order to have a fall crop of raspberries you will need to have an everbearing variety; *Rubus idaeus*. Unlike summer-bearing varieties which may have red, black or purple berries, the everbearing raspberries are usually red although the 'Fall Gold', 'Anne', and 'Kiwigold' varieties have yellow fruit. The cultivar that I have is 'Caroline' with a beautiful red raspberry. Since raspberries are self-fruiting it is not necessary to have several cultivars for pollination although each variety brings its own advantages.

With the everbearing varieties you have two options. They can be allowed to bear fruit in the summer and the fall or only in the fall. The crowns and roots of the raspberry are perennial but the individual canes live for two years. The summer-bearing raspberries will not produce on new growth (the primocanes) until the second year (the floricanes). The primocanes of everbearing raspberries will produce fruit in the fall of their first year. They will then bear fruit on those same canes the following summer. I planted canes in the spring three years ago and this was the best production year so far. If only a fall crop is desired all canes should be cut to the base before the new growth appears in the spring. For two crops a year simply thin out primocanes by cutting them back to the last visible node that had fruit or trimming any tips that are browned.

The fruiting of fall raspberries usually begins in August and can continue until there is a hard frost. In addition to the variety 'Caroline', 'Joan J' also begins producing in August. For a September-bearing variety look to "Heritage" or to 'Crimson Giant' that can be extended into late October if covered with high tunnels.

Growing raspberries is relatively easy if you keep a few things in mind. Raspberries prefer to be planted in a narrow row or hedge and trellised. They will be in the same location for up to 15 years so choose a site that is in sun for at least 6-8 hours a

day and will not block other plants. I have my canes in full sun but with their backs to a tall fence. This helps to block the wind so that they don't get desiccated but they still get good air circulation.



If you don't have raspberry canes as part of your habitat you may want to consider establishing a bed. The Connecticut Conservation Districts hold their Plant and Seedling sales every spring and are a great way to purchase native edible plants. They can be found online at <http://conservect.org/>. For more information raspberry fertilization and pruning or for other horticultural topics, feel free to contact us, toll-free, at the UConn Home & Garden Education Center at (877) 486-6271, visit our website at [www.ladybug.uconn.edu](http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu) or contact your local Cooperative Extension center.