

Erect, hedge forming blackberries fruit the year after planting and do not require a trellis, but are more easily managed a “T” type trellis about 3 – 4 feet high. Blackberries in general are better adapted to the southern part of Missouri (USDA Hardiness Zone 6) as they do not withstand cold winter temperatures.

Erect blackberries bear fruit in June and July and are generally earlier than the semi-erect thornless blackberries (Chester, Hull, Triple Crown). There are both thorny and thornless cultivars of erect blackberries available.

Recommended cultivars: *Thornless* - Natchez, Osage (new, for trial), Ouachita, Apache; *Thorny* – Chickasaw, Kiowa; *Primocane bearing (new for trial): thorny* – Prime Jim, Prime Jan, Prime Ark 45; *Thornless* – Prime Ark Freedom

**Planting:** Plant blackberries in the spring. Erect hedge forming blackberries can be planted as plants or as root pieces. Rows are usually spaced 10 feet apart. If plants are used, space them from 2 to 4 feet apart in the row. Dig a hole that is large enough to spread the roots out evenly, cover with soil, and firm soil around the plants. After planting, cut the cane to the ground and remove. Water the plants after planting. If root pieces are planted, dig a trench or furrow down the row about 4 inches deep and lay the root pieces down horizontally with the ends pointing to the ends of the row. Cover with soil and firm soil down around the root piece.

**Weed management:** It is extremely important to eradicate perennial weeds before you plant blackberries as the hedgerows are difficult to weed after plants are established.

**Growth cycle:** The blackberry cane grows for two years. The first year, it is called a "primocane" and does not bear fruit unless it is a primocane bearing variety. If a non-primocane fruiting type, it must be tipped or pinched back in summer so that it will produce lateral shoots that will bear fruit the following year. The second year it is called a floricanes and it bears fruit and dies. Productive hedgerows have a healthy mixture of both primocanes and floricanes at harvest.

**Fertilizer application:** The best way to determine fertilizer needs of the plants is by following recommendations based on soil sample results. The recommendations given here are general and should be fine-tuned to the fertility and nutrient holding ability of your particular soil, and the observations of the growth of your plants.

**Planting year:** One month after planting, apply 1 cup 13-13-13 or equivalent per 10 feet of hedgerow.

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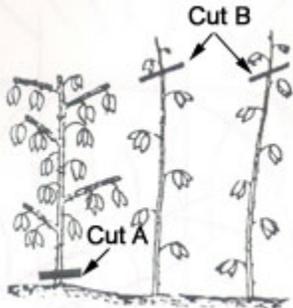
**Third+ season:** Apply 2 cups 13-13-13 per 10 feet of hedgerow in spring.

**Blossoms and Pollination:** In the Ozarks, we often experience "Blackberry Winter" - a cold spell during blackberry blossom. Even so, blackberry blossoms open in May and the threat of late spring frost injury is not as great as with strawberries.

You do not need 2 cultivars for cross pollination of blackberries. Although blossoms are pollinated by insects, much pollination is achieved by the wind.

**Harvest and Yield:** The erect blackberries generally ripen in June and July before the semi-erect blackberries. The fruit is ripe when it dulls somewhat in color and is removed easily from the plant. It is best to test a few berries. The fruit is used fresh but is more often used for cobblers, pies, jellies, jams and preserves. Blackberries will last from 2 to 3 days in the refrigerator if handled properly. Yield is 40 quarts per 100 foot of row.

**Pruning:**

		
<p><b>Summer.</b> Remove canes that produced fruit after harvest or in the following dormant season (Cut A). Summer tip new primocanes to 36 to 48 inches (Cut B).</p>	<p>Dormant season. Unpruned erect blackberries.</p>	<p>Dormant season. Prune leaving 6 healthy canes per square foot. Shorten the lateral branches back to 12 to 16 inches. Maintain the width of the hedgerow at about 18 inches wide.</p>
<p><i>Diagrams from: Klingbeil, G. C., E. K. Wade, and C. Koval. Wisconsin raspberries. Wisconsin Coop. Ext. Bull. No. A 1610.</i></p>		

**Pests and Problems:** Blackberry diseases include the fungus anthracnose, the fungus botrytis fruit and blossom blight, and the systemic fungus orange rust for which there is no treatment other than removing and burning infected plants. Spotted wing drosophila (SWD), red necked cane borers and other borers may be a problems.