

# Planting Bare-Root Raspberry Plants

## **Preparation:**

Remove the bare-root raspberry plants from the packaging and separate the plants from the bundle. Be careful of thorns if you are planting a thorned variety! Prune any individual damaged roots before planting. Allow just the roots to soak in a bucket of water for up to 2 hours before planting. Many gardeners like to allow their bare-root raspberry plants' roots to soak as they prepare the planting holes.

Choose a well-drained planting site with full sun (6-8 hours daily) and make sure the area is free of weeds. You may want to plan ahead and build a small trellis for your raspberry plants so that, once they're heavy with fruit, they will have the support they need to keep from bending over or breaking.

Another nutritious option is compost. This gardening favorite, which helps add nutrients to the soil, can also double as a mulch to keep weeds down and insulate roots during the winter!

## **Planting:**

Using a hand trowel or a shovel, dig your planting holes. Each bare-root raspberry plant will need it's own planting hole. The width and depth of the planting holes should be enough to accommodate each plant's current root system, while allowing some space for the roots to spread out. Each planting hole should be about 3 feet apart. This allows each mature plant to have it's own space to grow and set fruit.

When positioned in the hole, back-fill the soil in over and around the raspberry plant's roots, so that the topmost root has about an inch or two of soil covering it. Tramp the soil down with your hands to remove any air pockets that may have formed around the roots. Water thoroughly, reusing the water from the root-soaking bucket or from a hose to give the roots their first drink in their new home.

This part is very important: After planting, be sure to prune the bare-root canes back to about 2 inches about the ground. Many growers hesitate or skip this step, but it is crucial in encouraging the roots to send up new growth during the growing season. It's in the nature of raspberry plants to send up new growth as suckers or basal shoot from below the ground. In addition to buds on the cane, you should see new sprouts emerge up through the ground from the root system.

Following these steps will help you get your new bare-root raspberry plants off to a solid start. After they become established, you will enjoy fresh, easy-to-pick raspberries year after year.