



Magazine Issue 10
August 2026

Dear Fellow Allotmenters,

As summer moves into its later stages, August brings a wide variety of wild foods ready to be gathered. Berries, herbs, nuts, and greens are all coming into season, and some plants are beginning to set seed. It's a good time to make the most of what's available before autumn takes over.

August is an ideal time to explore the outdoors and take advantage of nature's late-summer offerings. With berries ripening, herbs in full flavour, and the first signs of autumn approaching, it's the perfect month to forage, preserve, and enjoy the wild food around you.

Whether you're picking blackberries for crumble, brewing elderberry syrup, or trying yarrow tea for the first time, each find connects you more closely to the seasons. Just remember to forage responsibly, positively identify every plant, and leave plenty behind for wildlife and others to enjoy.

Happy foraging!

Thanks for reading,

Gareth Richards (Treasurer)

Elizabeth Flats Allotments, Plot 14

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1. Blackberries (Rubus fruticosus)

Where to Find It

Hedgerows, woodland edges, railway banks — almost everywhere!

What to Pick

Glossy, plump blackberries that come away easily in your fingers. Avoid red or hard berries — they're not ripe yet.

How to Use It

- Classic blackberry crumble
- Add to breakfast oats or smoothies
- Steep in vinegar or gin for a seasonal infusion

Tip:

Pick early in the day before the sun softens them, and be mindful of brambles!

Health Benefits:

High in vitamin C, which supports the immune system and skin health

Rich in antioxidants like anthocyanins, which protect cells from damage

Good source of fibre, supporting digestion and heart health

May support brain function and memory



Growing Blackberries at the Allotment



How to Grow Blackberries: A Detailed Guide

Despite being commonly referred to as berries and consumed as fruits, blackberries are technically an aggregate fruit, composed of numerous smaller drupelets. If you are wondering how to grow blackberries, allow us to help you with the detailed information.

From choosing the right location for the plant to the right time to harvest, we will uncover all the essential tips for an abundant blackberry harvest.

If you grow blackberries at your allotment, share your tips [here](#)

When to Grow Blackberries

Blackberries can be grown in the UK and are typically present from late spring to early autumn.

Health Benefits:

High in vitamin C

Traditionally used to support digestion

Mild astringent and anti-inflammatory properties when cooked



4. Crab Apples (*Malus sylvestris*)

Where to Find:

Hedgerows, woodland edges, old orchards, and roadside trees.

What to Pick:

Small, hard apples. Tart when raw but perfect for cooking.

How to Use:

- Crab apple jelly or chutney
- Mixed with other fruits in hedgerow jams
- Dried into slices or made into vinegar

Health Benefits:

High in natural pectin, supporting gut health and useful for making preserves

Contain polyphenols, which may reduce inflammation

Source of vitamin C and potassium

vitamin C and potassium



5. Hazelnuts (*Corylus avellana*)

Where to Find:

Woodland edges and hedgerows.

What to Pick:

Green or ripening nuts still in their husks. Harvest before squirrels get them.

How to Use:

- Eaten raw or roasted
- Ground into flour
- Used in baking, granola, or nut butters

Health Benefits:

High in healthy fats, especially monounsaturated fats

Good source of vitamin E, which supports skin and heart health

Rich in magnesium, B vitamins, and fibre

It may help reduce cholesterol levels



6. Ground Elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*)

Where to Find:

Gardens, parks, allotment edges, woodland paths.

What to Pick:

Young leaves before they become tough or bitter.

How to Use:

- Sautéed with garlic and oil
- Added to soups, omelettes, or quiches
- Mixed into leafy green blends

Health Benefits:

- Traditionally used for gout and joint pain
- Mild diuretic and anti-inflammatory properties
- vitamin C and minerals like potassium and calcium



7. Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*)

Where to Find:

Woodland edges, damp grassy banks, and hedgerows — mostly in spring, but may flower again after rain in cooler areas.

What to Pick:

Pale yellow flowers and young leaves.

How to Use:

- Flowers are used raw as garnish for salads, cakes, or drinks
- Leaves may be added to spring greens (though slightly fuzzy)
- Can be candied for decorations

Health Benefits:

Traditionally used for mild sedative effects

It may help with headaches, anxiety, and insomnia

Contains saponins and flavonoids with potential anti-inflammatory action



8. Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

Where to Find:

Meadows, grassy verges, field edges, and dry open ground. Yarrow grows low and fern-like, with clusters of flat, white or pale pink flowers.

What to Pick:

Young leaves for eating (before flowering is best)

Flower heads for teas and tinctures

How to Use:

- Add a few chopped young leaves to salads (sparingly – they're strong)
- Brew dried flowers into a
- herbal tea
- Use fresh flowers in infused oils or salves for skin
- Combine with elderflower and mint for a cooling summer tea

Health Benefits:

Traditionally used to support digestion, reduce fever, and aid circulation

Anti-inflammatory and antiseptic, useful for skin care

It may help ease menstrual cramps and minor wounds when used topically

Often used in herbal blends for cold and flu support.



Summer

E	A	D	X	P	R	S	X	M	N	I	N	B	I	E	N	C	E
O	L	E	M	O	D	E	S	U	I	T	C	A	S	E	P	H	R
B	I	F	S	R	B	L	Y	N	I	N	W	F	F	C	R	K	L
E	A	K	I	C	E	C	R	E	A	M	R	N	F	O	F	P	H
L	S	A	W	E	A	O	M	E	U	V	L	I	L	M	A	S	T
S	L	U	C	I	C	I	U	V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N	P	S
A	P	L	N	E	H	N	B	P	K	E	E	D	P	O	N	R	U
L	D	A	S	S	L	C	M	O	Z	H	N	E	F	R	U	O	P
Y	N	H	T	H	C	F	U	T	R	A	V	E	L	T	L	X	P
U	J	R	H	E	O	R	V	E	C	E	O	E	O	R	E	M	O
M	E	T	E	L	S	W	E	E	O	Z	G	N	P	T	N	S	R
S	U	N	R	C	H	I	N	E	B	A	N	D	F	A	R	V	T
B	P	T	I	V	T	V	P	D	N	T	J	E	K	E	O	W	E
T	Y	I	B	R	D	A	T	V	G	S	W	I	M	S	U	I	T
Z	U	M	B	R	E	L	L	A	R	N	U	E	R	L	U	I	X
S	H	A	D	F	J	M	R	M	T	S	U	R	F	I	N	G	R
C	E	O	N	E	M	O	I	B	K	O	F	A	Y	W	O	Y	Y

SUN
VACATION
SUNSCREEN
ICE CREAM

FLIP FLOPS
SWIMSUIT
BEACH
UMBRELLA

FAN
TRAVEL
SUITCASE
SURFING

At the airport

H	B	S	I	M	I	K	B	A	N	D	S	H	L	T	H	K	A
E	H	T	Y	C	O	M	E	V	I	E	P	E	P	E	A	N	P
I	F	J	E	T	W	A	Y	M	A	R	A	A	O	R	T	A	E
E	B	L	V	A	Z	D	A	K	J	I	S	N	A	M	F	Q	C
P	S	Y	A	V	L	R	L	O	R	Q	S	I	D	I	W	P	U
M	R	P	C	V	O	T	P	A	I	R	P	L	A	N	E	L	S
S	W	A	R	A	U	E	M	R	K	S	O	U	D	A	R	A	T
E	R	G	U	R	N	L	B	W	R	G	R	H	E	L	A	S	O
C	I	A	I	B	G	N	y	S	H	U	T	O	K	M	S	B	M
U	N	T	A	E	E	I	E	A	E	P	N	L	P	M	O	J	S
R	T	E	L	N	M	A	R	R	A	R	R	W	A	A	L	H	E
I	E	D	Q	A	K	J	H	R	N	Y	D	F	A	R	P	K	C
T	R	U	E	L	O	R	Q	A	I	D	E	A	P	Y	E	S	D
Y	L	O	N	O	T	E	P	A	N	S	R	V	N	E	U	H	O
R	S	E	T	P	U	Y	N	A	R	G	I	S	P	I	L	O	T
N	B	L	U	G	G	A	G	E	M	K	A	H	A	I	R	A	M
L	D	S	F	V	C	A	M	P	A	N	I	R	L	A	S	O	E

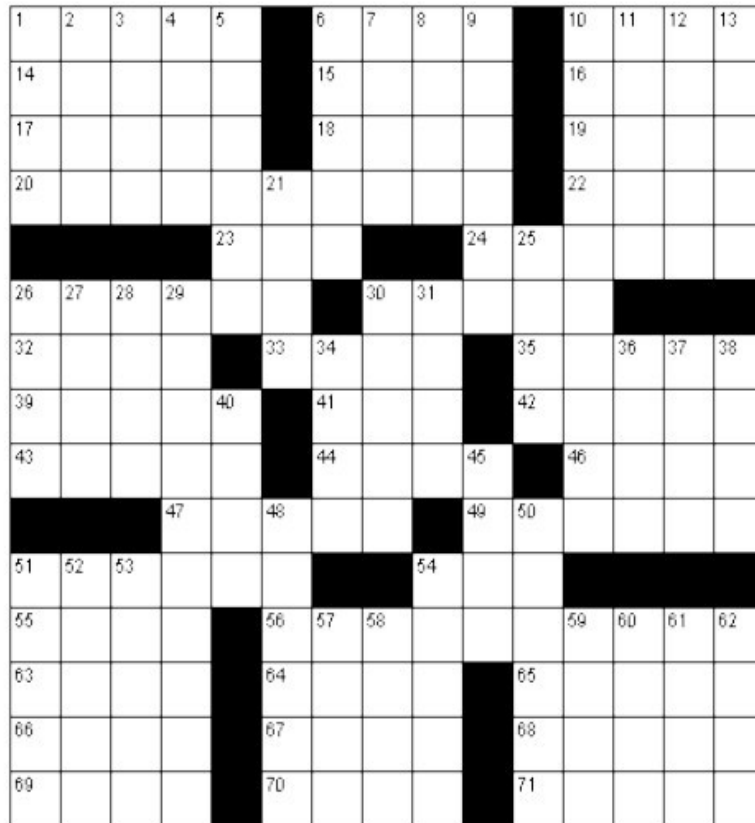
AIRPLANE
RUNWAY
LUGGAGE
GATE

SECURITY
JETWAY
CUSTOMS
LOUNGE

HANGAR
TERMINAL
PILOT
PASSPORT



Crossword no.147



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ACROSS

1. Hops
6. Employee Stock Ownership Plan
10. Broad
14. Fortune telling card
15. Arctic gull
16. Something previously mentioned
17. Alewife fish
18. God of war (Greek mythology)
19. 9
20. Generous to the poor
22. A measured portion of medicine
23. Obese
24. Roof support beam
26. Bigotry
30. Pastoral or bucolic
32. Style or grace
33. Part of a skeleton
35. Telegraph code
39. Latin-American ballroom dance
41. One of the tribes of Israel
42. Curse
43. Fortune tellers
44. Chooses
46. Hearing organs
47. Alarm
49. Allow
51. Speaker
54. Merriment

DOWN

55. Wise men
56. Remorse for past conduct
63. Concept
64. Operatic solo
65. Small intestine
66. Shade
67. Eggs of parasitic insects
68. Desert "trees"
69. Location
70. Quiz or exam
71. Mound

DOWN

1. Pierce
2. Cabbage
3. To press clothes
4. Model
5. What musical notes are written on
6. Precise
7. Withered
8. Portent
9. A dough of flour, water and shortening
10. An anemone
11. Fool
12. Compact
13. Chieftain
21. A metrical unit with unstressed-stressed syllables
25. Gifts to the poor
26. Drenches
27. Winged
28. Walking stick
29. Curry favor
30. Clumsy
31. A depression caused by an impact
34. Smell
36. 500 sheets of paper
37. Indian dress
38. Formerly
40. City in Norway
45. Twirled
48. Fallible
50. Lure
51. Leaves out

DOWN

52. Half-diameters
53. Spy
54. Banquet
57. A Great Lake
58. Holes in the ground
59. "Oh my!"
60. Between the head and shoulders
61. Pretty
62. Anagram of "Mire"

Link to Brimsmore Garden Centre

We have a Gold Club discount deal with Brimsmore Garden Centre.

They offer all member's 25% discount on Spring bulbs for sale in October and then again a second deal for anything at the Centre that is not on special offer which can be used as many times as you want during January and February.

I have used it for compost in the past and the savings are quite good on your pocket. You can have the items delivered which is free within the Yeovil area or you can pick your items up at the Garden Centre.

Brimsmore Garden Centre website address :

<https://store.thegardensgroup.co.uk>

Email : brimsmore@thegardensgroup.co.uk

Telephone no. : 01935 411000

Address : Brimsmore Gardens
 Tintinhull Road
 Yeovil
 Somerset
 BA21 3NU

Where we meet

Johnson Park, Coronation Avenue, Yeovil. BA21 3DX

as well as

Brimsmore Gardens, Tintinhull Road, Yeovil, Somerset BA21 3NU

We generally meet twice a month. The last Thursday of the month is reserved for a committee meeting. We discuss all things related to the Association and deal with any matters arising.

We meet at 8pm on these nights in the lounge bar at Johnson Park Sports and Social Club. They have a car park

Minutes are recorded by our Secretary. The Chairman opens the meeting and directs us through the running order and as well as site supervisor's input there is a monthly Treasurer's report.

The other meeting night is a more social event and this takes place on the 1st Thursday of the month. We can invite a speaker, you can buy a drink at the bar and there is a raffle normally run by Phillip.

Three times a year on the 1st Wednesday of the month we meet at Brimsmore Garden Centre for our social. We meet in the Apple Tree restaurant at 6.30pm. Some tea and biscuits are available for free. We try to have a guest speaker at these events or a talk on a garden topic and a raffle run by Phillip's wife.

These three events replace our said Thursday social meetings at Johnson Park.

Your annual membership card gives you the time and dates of meetings for the year ahead. Our membership night for renewals is every March and again a discount night is offered for any garden centre items which are not on special offer.

King Seeds - Top Tips for Seed Sowing

- Use seed sowing compost, not multi-purpose. Multi-purpose compost often contains too much feed which can damage or kill young seedlings before they grow.
- Water with fresh tap water. Avoid using saved rainwater for seeds and young seedlings, as pathogens can build up in water butts and containers which can affect germination. Rainwater is fine to use on established plants.
- Maintain the correct temperature. Ensure the seeds are kept at their ideal germination temperature.
- Monitor the water levels. Some composts may appear dry on the surface but are moist beneath. Certain seeds such as peas and beans tend to rot off if they are overwatered, yet if they are too dry, their seed coats may not break down properly, preventing germination.
- Water the drill directly when sowing outside during a dry spell. It is important when sowing seeds direct into the allotment soil when the soil is dry, to always water the seed drill first before sowing. Draw out the seed drill, then give a thorough watering so the base of the drill is really wet, then leave to drain for a few minutes before sowing the seed onto the wet soil. Once sown, the seed is then covered over with the dry soil, which traps the moisture below where the seeds need it to germinate. This is a far better method than constantly watering overhead with a rose on a can, which will evaporate with the sun or drying winds and put a hard cap over the soil, making it much harder for the seedlings to push through.

Solution

S	K	I	P	S		E	S	O	P		W	I	D	E
T	A	R	O	T		X	E	M	A		I	D	E	M
A	L	O	S	A		A	R	E	S		N	I	N	E
B	E	N	E	F	I	C	E	N	T		D	O	S	E
				F	A	T			R	A	F	T	E	R
R	A	C	I	S	M		I	D	Y	L	L			
E	L	A	N		B	O	N	E		M	O	R	S	E
T	A	N	G	O		D	A	N		S	W	E	A	R
S	E	E	R	S		O	P	T	S		E	A	R	S
			A	L	E	R	T		P	E	R	M	I	T
O	R	A	T	O	R			F	U	N				
M	A	G	I		R	E	P	E	N	T	A	N	C	E
I	D	E	A		A	R	I	A		I	L	E	U	M
T	I	N	T		N	I	T	S		C	A	C	T	I
S	I	T	E		T	E	S	T		E	S	K	E	R

Growing Apricots at the Allotment



How to Grow Apricots: A Detailed Guide

You may be wondering “Can you grow apricot trees in the UK” and if you are, the answer is yes. Apricot trees thrive in the UK if they receive abundant sunlight and are well taken care of. If you are wondering how to grow apricots, let us help you with our expert insights.

From choosing the right variety to soil preparation and planting, we will uncover all the essential tips for a successful apricot harvest.

If you’re a beginner or avid gardener and have tackled the challenge of growing apricots, share your tips [here](#).

When to Grow Apricots

Despite common belief, apricots can be grown in the UK in a sunny position, due to the modern varieties now available. They can be vulnerable to frost so choose your variety wisely, depending on your location. Bare root plants can be planted during autumn when it is dormant, but the soil is

still warm. On the other hand, container-grown apricot trees can be planted at any time.

Where and How to Grow Apricots

If you're not sure where to grow your apricots, make sure to choose a spot in the sun with well-drained soil that'll keep your apricot tree protected from frost.

For optimal growth, it is best to choose south-facing slopes. Once you have chosen your sunny spot, dig a hole for the root ball, adding in some well-rotted manure or compost and water. Mulch around the base to suppress the weeds and retain moisture.

Apricot trees can grow up to 12 feet tall but you can train them to grow bushier and smaller or fanned out against a wall. It's best to check the variety you have for details. Scroll down for our apricot variety recommendations!

How to Take Care of an Apricot Tree

Growing apricots in the UK involves patience. Apricots do take some looking after but are a very attractive addition to your plot or garden with spring blossoms and juicy and sweet fruit during summer.

When the apricot tree is established after a couple of years, make sure you water regularly. Similarly, make sure to protect it from frosts and pests. Be mindful of canker also. Apricot trees also need pruning during spring or the end of the summer. The fruits grow offshoots from the previous year; on older wood.

Apricots are self-fertile but sometimes need help with pollination if it is cooler weather or you are in a more northern area of the UK. You can carefully move pollen from one bloom of blossom to another using a paintbrush or something similar.

When and How to Harvest Apricot

The best time to pick apricots is between late spring and mid summer depending on your location. Generally speaking, your apricots will be ready to harvest from July - August.

Look for apricots that are slightly softer and have a rich and deep colour. Pick them gently by twisting and pulling. Pick the apricots and transport them carefully to avoid bruising them. You can also thin out a heavy glut to avoid damage to the fruits. They are ready when they easily come away when picking.

Apricots are self-fertile but sometimes need help with pollination if it is cooler weather or you are in a more northern area. Carefully move pollen from one bloom of blossom to another using a paintbrush or something similar.

How to Store Apricots

Store your apricots at room temperature until they are ripe. If you want to preserve them longer, put them in a plastic bag and store them in your fridge's drawer. They'll last about a week. You can also freeze sliced apricots, or dry them out for crunchy snacks. Check out our recipes [here!](#)

Growing Apricots in the UK: A Summary

Planting Apricots

- Select a sunny and well-drained location
- Plant in late winter/early spring
- Space trees 20-25 feet apart
- Dig a hole, position rootball
- Water thoroughly

Growing Apricots

- Well-drained, fertile soil

- Prune annually
- Protect from pests

Harvesting Apricots

- Monitor your apricots for ripeness; slightly soft to touch
- Harvest morning; cool temperatures
- Twist gently; avoid bruising
- Use immediately or store cool
- Check daily; ripen quickly

Popular Apricot Varieties

- When it comes to popular apricot varieties, 'Blenheim' is known for its rich flavour and juicy flesh.
- Another variety is 'Moorpark', which is known for its big and sweet fruit.
- 'Gold Kist', which prefers warmer climates, is another popular variety.
- 'Harcot' is renowned for its cold hardiness and delicious fruit.

Each cultivar has its own unique flavour profile and growth features, making it suitable for a variety of climates and tastes. Trying out different apricot varieties is a learning process for many gardeners, making the process of how to grow apricots even more exciting.

The Different Ways to Use Apricots

Learning how to grow apricots can help you open up different culinary opportunities.

Apricots are delicious eaten fresh and raw, as well as being used in desserts and jams.

- They can be enjoyed as a snack, in salads or as a topping for fruit platters.
- They have a sweet and tangy flavour that is perfect for any season.

- In baking, you can use apricots in pies and tarts, as well as in savoury recipes. They add sweetness and texture to any dish.

Common Problems with Apricots

Apricots are susceptible to a variety of pests, including aphids, borers and fungi. These pests can cause damage to the tree and the fruit, leading to loss of fruit and death of the tree.

- Poor pollination of apricots can also lead to low yield.
- Extreme weather conditions, poor watering and lack of nutrients can also affect the growth and quality of apricots.
- Fruit cracking can be caused by excessive or irregular watering, which can affect the marketability of the fruit and increase the risk of infections.

Growing Blackberries at the Allotment



How to Grow Blackberries: A Detailed Guide

Despite being commonly referred to as berries and consumed as fruits, blackberries are technically an aggregate fruit, composed of numerous smaller drupelets. If you are wondering how to grow blackberries, allow us to help you with the detailed information.

From choosing the right location for the plant to the right time to harvest, we will uncover all the essential tips for an abundant blackberry harvest.

If you grow blackberries at your allotment, share your tips [here](#)

When to Grow Blackberries

Blackberries can be grown in the UK and are typically present from late spring to early autumn.

Blackberry canes can be planted from January to April and come in a range of varieties along with hybrid berries that grow similarly, such as [loganberries](#), dewberries and [tayberries](#) to name a few.

It's important to note, though, that blackberries are quite resilient and can tolerate a range of conditions, so they can be planted throughout the year with proper care.

Where to Grow Blackberries

They like a sunny spot and regular watering when they are bearing fruit, although blackberries are hardy, so can cope with little water.

Make sure that the chosen location has sufficient space for the blackberry plants to spread, as they grow fast. If you are tight for space, you may want to train it along a fence.

How to Plant Blackberries

Bareroot blackberry plants can be bought when they are dormant and planted in the winter months and require a good space for growth. They do not need to be planted deeply but have the width for roots and expansion.

Space your blackberry plants about 3-4 feet apart in rows with 6-8 feet between rows to allow for adequate airflow and future growth.

How to Take Care of Blackberries Plants

When you have planted your cane, trim it off to approximately 9 inches to healthy buds and support straight away due to its fast growth pace.

Trimming straight away will help send healthy shoots in Spring onwards.

Prune and train the growth regularly to encourage airflow to the fruit. Your vigorous blackberry plant will soon take over if you neglect it, so make sure to stay on top of it.

When training and pruning, do it in a way that will make for easy harvesting and cutting back during the winter when the flowering and fruit are spent.

When and How to Harvest Blackberries

You will be able to harvest a good crop of blackberries one year from planting onwards, the fruit will be dark and easy to pull during late summer and into autumn. Red berries tend to be more tart in flavour.

To harvest blackberries, wait until the berries are fully ripe and detach from the plant with a gentle tug. Avoid picking berries that are still red or firm, as they are not fully ripe.

Common Problems with Blackberries

- Common pests that affect blackberries include aphids, spider mites, and raspberry fruitworms. These pests can cause damage to leaves, flowers, and fruit, impacting plant health and yield.
- Blackberries are susceptible to diseases such as powdery mildew, which appears as a white powdery substance on leaves and stems, and Botrytis fruit rot, which causes fruit to become mouldy and rot.
- Excessive moisture in the soil can lead to root rot, a fungal disease that affects the roots of blackberry plants, causing them to rot and eventually die.
- Thrips are tiny insects that can cause damage to blackberry foliage by feeding on plant tissues, resulting in distorted leaves and reduced plant strength.

Popular Blackberry Varieties

- Varieties such as 'Loch Ness' and 'Chester' are valued as they lack thorns, making them easier to harvest and manage.
- 'Marion' is favoured by many gardeners for its excellent flavour.
- 'Apache Blackberry' produces large, firm berries with a rich, sweet flavour, making it a popular choice among many gardeners.

- 'Helen' is a high-yielding variety that produces large, glossy black berries with a sweet flavour.

Trying out different blackberry varieties is a learning process for many allotment growers, making the process of growing blackberries in the UK an enjoyable one.

The Different Ways to Use Blackberries

Learning how to grow blackberries can help you enjoy a variety of delicious dishes.

- Blackberries can be eaten fresh. You can freeze them or use them for many dessert recipes and jams.

You can blend blackberries with other fruits, yoghurt, or milk to make delicious and nutritious smoothies

Add blackberries to pies, cobblers, crisps, muffins, cakes, and other baked goods for a sweet and tangy flavour.

Make homemade blackberry jam, jelly, or preserves to enjoy on toast, pancakes, or as a topping for desserts.

Dry blackberries to make homemade fruit sweets or add them to trail mix for a nutritious snack option.

Growing Blackberries in the UK: A Summary

Planting Blackberries

- Plant canes with generous space
- Support straight away
- Trim off to healthy bud

Growing Blackberries

- Prune and train regularly to keep control and air to the fruit
- Train for easy picking
- Water during dry spells, although very resilient

Harvesting Blackberries

- When plump and dark
- Lighter red ones are more tart
- You can freeze blackberries

Growing Cherries at the Allotment



How to Grow Cherries: A Detailed Guide

Growing cherries add a burst of colour and beauty to any garden with their juicy red fruits and pretty spring blossoms. They come in two main types; the sweet cherry and the acidic cooking cherry. You can choose varieties that are dwarf if you're short of space, or self-fertile trees if you are planting more than one.

If you are wondering how to grow cherries, let us help you with our expert insights.

From choosing the right variety to soil preparation and planting, we will uncover all the essential tips for a healthy cherry harvest.

When and Where to Grow Cherries

Cherry trees can be planted from November - December if they are dormant root trees and container-grown cherry trees can be planted at any time.

Cherry trees like full sun, but the acid cooking cherries can thrive in the shade.

When planting cherry trees, pick a spot with good drainage and airflow to keep them healthy. Make sure there's enough room for them to grow and get sunlight easily. Adding organic matter to the soil before planting helps the roots grow strong and keeps the tree healthy.

How and When to Plant Cherries

Dig a hole twice as broad and a little deeper than the cherry tree's root ball to prepare the ground for planting. To encourage root penetration and growth, loosen the soil at the bottom of the hole.

The cherry tree should then be carefully taken out of its container or, if it is bare-root, its roots should be unwrapped. Make sure the tree's soil level is the same as the surrounding ground before placing it in the middle of the hole.

To settle the soil and hydrate the roots, water the newly planted cherry tree generously.

How to Take Care of a Cherry Plant

Cherry trees require regular watering until they become established. Add well-rotted manure for the best results.

- Prune after harvesting

Harvesting Cherries

- Harvest during July - August
- Sweet cherries can be eaten raw
- Acid cooking cherries can be used in jams and cooked desserts

Cherry trees; when blossoming, will require protection from late frosts. A fruit cage is also beneficial to prevent the birds from eating the fruits. Aphids can sometimes be an issue also, so watch out.

When and How to Harvest Cherries

If you are wondering when to pick cherries, keep reading!

After blossoming, cherry trees will form the fruits, which will be ready to harvest July - August depending on the weather. Pruning should be done after harvesting.

Common Problems with Cherries

- Aphids can infest cherry trees, sucking sap from the leaves and causing them to distort and yellow.
- Brown rot is a fungal disease that can affect both the fruit and blossoms of cherry trees, causing brown spots and rotting.
- Cherry fruit fly larvae can infest cherry fruit, causing it to become discoloured and unpalatable.
- Cherries may fail to produce fruit if pollination is inadequate, which can happen due to factors such as unfavourable weather conditions or a lack of pollinators.

Popular Cherries Varieties

Each cherry variety has its own unique flavour profile and growth features, making it suitable for a variety of climates and tastes. Trying out different cherry varieties is a learning process for beginner allotment growers, making the process of how to grow cherries experimental.

'Stella' is a self-fertile sweet cherry variety with large, juicy fruit that ripens in mid to late July.

'Morello' is a sour cherry variety often used for cooking and preserving due to its tart flavour. It ripens in late July to early August.

'Regina', is another sweet cherry variety known for its excellent flavour and firm texture. It ripens in mid to late July.

'Merton Glory' is a traditional sweet cherry variety with dark red fruit that ripens in late July to early August.

The Different Ways to Use Cherries

Learning how to grow cherries means that you will be eating and cooking with cherries. Here are some ideas

Sweet cherries can be eaten fresh and raw and cooked

Acid cooked cherries can be used for cooked desserts, pies and jams.

Growing Cherries in Summary

Planting Cherries

- Plant dormant bareroot trees in November-December
- Plant ocntainer grown trees anytime
- Select self-fertile for one tree and dwarf for a smaller tree

Growing Cherries

- Water regularly until established
- Protect from frosts and birds

Growing Blueberries at the Allotment



How to Grow Blueberries: A Detailed Guide

Blueberry plants are a stunning addition to a plot or garden with their white, bell-shaped flowers in spring and blue fruits in summer. In autumn, the leaves turn yellow, red and purple.

If you want to learn how to grow blueberries, we have an extensive yet easy guide for you.

We will provide all the necessary details from picking the ideal spot for the plant to the right time to harvest, ensuring you get a bountiful harvest.

If you want to join our online community, connect with likeminded growers and share your blueberry growing journey with us, sign up [here!](#)

When and Where to Grow Blueberries

Blueberries thrive in the sunshine in well-drained, moisture-retentive soil that is acidic. If your soil is not acidic, dig in plenty of organic matter, such as leaf mould, pine needles, conifer bark and other acidic organic waste. The reason for this is the acidic nature of the soil creates a breeding ground for bacteria and fungi, which releases ammonia and minerals that blueberry bushes love.

It is best to plant bare-root, dormant plants during winter to early spring in the UK. However, container-grown blueberry plants can be grown at any time.

How and When to Plant Blueberries

Dig a hole twice as wide as the root ball and just as deep, gently loosening the soil to encourage root growth and establishment. Consider spacing the plants at least 4 to 6 feet apart to allow enough room for growth and air circulation.

The blueberry plant should not completely dry out or become water-logged either, striking a balance somewhere in the middle is optimal. Mulch around the base of the blueberry bush is recommended to retain moisture and suppress the weeds. Upon planting your blueberry bush, Water in well and create a hole deep enough for the root ball but wider enough for the roots to spread out.

How to Take Care of a Blueberry Plant

Sometimes blueberries can be affected by the colder weather and wet weather and may require protection, depending on the variety and your location. You will also need to protect your blueberry plants in a fruit cage or netting to stop the birds from eating the fruits.

Pruning your blueberry plant is not necessary, other than to remove dead or damaged shoots and stems.

When and How to Harvest Blueberries

If you are wondering when to pick blueberries, you've come to the right place we have got you covered!

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When harvesting blueberries, gently grasp the ripe berries between your thumb and forefinger, then give a slight twist to detach them from the stem. Avoid pulling too hard, as this can damage the plant. It's best to pick blueberries in the morning when they are cool and firm.

Common Problems with Blueberries

Blueberries are susceptible to pests such as Japanese beetles, blueberry maggots and birds. These pests can damage foliage, flowers, and fruit, affecting overall plant health and yield.

- Common diseases that affect blueberries include powdery mildew, botrytis blight, and anthracnose.
- Blueberries require acidic soil with a pH between 4.5 and 5.5 for healthy growth. Alkaline soil can lead to nutrient deficiencies and poor plant health.
- Blueberries are very sensitive plants. Environmental stressors such as drought, excessive heat, and frost can ruin your efforts.

Popular Blueberries Varieties

In your process of learning how to grow blueberries, trying out different varieties will broaden your knowledge of their unique characteristics and requirements.

'Duke' is a popular choice among allotment growers in the UK. It is known for its large berries and excellent flavour and is also valued for its high yields.

- 'Bluecrop' is another widely cultivated variety in the UK, popular for its abundant, medium-sized berries and its ability to thrive in varying growing conditions.
- 'Chandler' blueberries are loved for their exceptionally sweet flavour and large fruit size. They are favoured by many growers for their high yields and excellent dessert quality.
- 'Liberty' are highly valued for their strong consistency and intense, sweet-tart taste. This variety is renowned for its continuous harvest and high disease resistance.

The Different Ways to Use Blueberries

Learning how to grow blueberries can help you open up different culinary opportunities.

Blueberries are really versatile - they can be eaten fresh or cooked in desserts and preserves.

- They can be added to your morning routine by sprinkling them over cereal, oatmeal, or yoghurt for a nutritious boost.
- You could make blueberry jam, jelly, or compote to enjoy the fruit's flavour year-round on toast, scones, or as a topping for desserts.
- Blend your blueberries into smoothies or juices for a refreshing and nutritious drink.
- You could even get creative and add to a summer salad!

Growing Blueberries in the UK: A Summary

Planting Blueberries

- Plant dormant bareroot during winter-early spring

- Plant container grown plants any time
- Plant in acidic soil or add acidic matter

Growing Blueberries

- Protect from the wet, cold and birds
- Mulch and water during dry spells
- Prune minimally to remove damage

Harvesting Blueberries

- Harvest from mid summer
- Stagger over the summer
- Berries will turn from green to blue when ripened

Growing Blackcurrants at the Allotment



How to Grow Blackcurrants: A Detailed Guide

Blackcurrants are a juicy and plentiful crop in summer, perfect for jams, desserts and drinks. Better yet, they are easy to grow. If you're wondering how to grow blackcurrants, allow us to help you with a detailed guide.

We will provide all the necessary guidance for a successful blackberry harvest, from picking the ideal spot for the plant to harvesting at the right time.

When and Where to Grow Blackcurrants

Blackcurrant plants can be grown from dormant bare-root trees during winter to early spring or container-grown plants can be grown at any time of the year.

Blackcurrants like full sun, or light shade, and moisture-retentive soil. Choose a sunny or partially shaded spot in your allotment that receives at least six hours of sunlight per day.

How to Plant Blackcurrants

Dig a hole large enough for the root ball but deeper than previously grown and spread the roots out. Dig in plenty of well-rotted manure or compost first, then fill in the hole afterwards and push the soil down firmly around the base. You can add mulch to retain moisture and suppress weeds.

If you are planting blackcurrant plants in multiple numbers, space them 5 to 6 feet apart to allow for adequate air circulation and room for growth.

How to Take Care of a Blackcurrant Plant

When growing blackcurrants, it's important to provide proper care to the tree for the best results. Blackcurrants benefit from pruning during winter when it is dormant, to help with shoot and root growth. If you are in an area that is prone to late frosts, your blackcurrants may require protection when it is flowering to avoid a poor crop.

Water well during dry spells in the first year until the plant has become established. The blackcurrants; like other fruits, will benefit from a fruit cage or protection from birds.

When and How to Harvest Blackcurrants

Blackcurrants will be ready for harvesting during July-August when the blackcurrants are dark, plump and juicy. They easily pull off the stems.

Blackcurrant bushes often produce berries in big quantities, so it will be better to harvest them in stages as the berries ripen to make sure you collect them when they taste best and are the freshest.

Common Problems with Blackcurrants

- Aphids, such as blackcurrant aphids and greenflies, can infest blackcurrant bushes, causing damage to leaves and reducing the yield.
- Powdery mildew, a fungal disease, can develop on blackcurrant leaves, appearing as a white powdery coating. This can deform the leaves and reduce the growth of the plant.

Birds, particularly blackbirds, can be attracted to ripening blackcurrants and may cause significant damage if not protected with netting or other protective measures.

Popular Blackcurrant Varieties

Trying out different blackcurrant varieties is a learning process for many gardeners, making the process of learning how to grow blackcurrants a fun one.

- Ben Connan is a high-yielding variety known for its large, sweet berries and disease resistance.

- Ben Sarek is a compact bush ideal for smaller gardens, producing abundant crops of medium-sized berries with excellent flavour.

Ben Lomond is A vigorous, disease-resistant variety that produces large, juicy berries with a rich flavour, ideal for fresh eating or processing.

The Different Ways to Use Blackcurrants

Learning how to grow blackcurrants can help you open up different culinary opportunities.

Blackcurrants are commonly used to make delicious jams and jellies, appreciated for their intense flavour and natural tartness. You can enjoy

these preserves by spreading them on toast, or scones, or used as fillings in cakes and pastries.

You can also use them to make refreshing beverages such as cordials, syrups, and fruit juices.

Frozen blackcurrants can be added to smoothies, yoghurt, or baked goods, while dried blackcurrants make a nutritious and flavourful snack.

- Blackcurrants add a burst of flavour to desserts such as pies, crumbles, tarts, and cobblers.

Growing Blackcurrants in the UK: A Summary

Planting Blackcurrants

- Plant dormant bareroot trees in winter-early spring
- Plant container grown plants any time
- Plant in a sunny or lightly shaded position

Growing Blackcurrants

- Water during dry spells until established
- Protect from frosts and birds
- Prune annually for new growth

Harvesting Blackcurrants

- Harvest July-August
- Pick from stems when black and juicy
- Can be eaten raw or cooked or frozen for storage

How to Contact the Editor

If you have comments or you know I have given wrong advice then please contact me by email at

gareth.richards@yeovil-allotments-association.co.uk

If you have something to contribute or have a say on allotment life, then please use my email to send your contributions.

I am going to process the magazine issue once a month, so if there are comments you would like to make they can be answered in future editions.

I would like to add that most of the articles are taken off the web and some well known gardening and allotments magazines have been read in the making of our magazine content.

We also have our own website at :

www.yeovil-allotments-association.co.uk

where you can find this magazine as well as a catalogue

Happy Allotmenting and best wishes,

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