Planning your blueberry buffer

buffers for blue lakes

a program of The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds

Low bush blueberries are native to Vermont. They thrive on lakeshores where you have several hours of sunshine each day. They can survive the weight of snow, and are better able to handle wind than high bush blueberries.

Half-high and high-bush blueberries are cultivated versions that are adapted to the growing conditions in your area. They generally have larger berries and less of a "wild" taste. (A half-high blueberry is a cross between a low-bush and high-bush plant that has been developed in a plant-breeding program.)

Blueberries need soil that is acid, that is not too wet, and that has a good amount of organic matter, like compost. (Not too sandy or rocky; not too much heavy clay-like soil.)

It is easy to add what the soil needs.

- Elmore Roots nursery has a complete soil amendment for blueberries.
- Or you can make your own mix of (1) elemental sulphur, iron sulfate, sphagnum peat moss, or pine needles to increase acidity, and (2) compost made from manure, vegetation, or food scraps.
- If you are planting close to evergreen trees or shrubs—or rhododendrons and azaleas—the soil should already be acid.
- Almost all fruits do best in slightly acidic soil, somewhere between a pH of 5.5 and 6.5. Blueberries prefer a soil of even greater acidity of between 4.0 and 5.0.

Blueberries need friends for pollination

- Most fruit trees, including blueberries, have both male and female organs on the same flower, but not all are self-pollinating. The best bet for blueberries is to have different varieties of blueberries within 100 feet, so bees can travel and cross-pollinate.
- Northcountry is one cultivar that is self-compatible and can be planted without another pollenizer cultivar. Pollination by wild or domestic bees is essential.

The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds

The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds, Inc. | P.O. Box 766 | Montpelier, VT 05601 | www.vermontlakes.org

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Native Low-bush Blueberries*

	Angustifolium*	Puttee*	Friendship*
Yield	1-3 lbs/bush	1-3 lbs/bush	4-6 lbs/bush
Plant height	10 - 14""	12 - 18"	24 - 36"
Plant spread	10 - 14"	12 - 24"	24 - 36"
Features	Low-bush; wild flavor	Low-bush; wild flavor; branching	Low-bush; aromatic, sweet wild flavor
Berry size	Small	Small	Small
Ripening	July-Aug	July	August

Cultivated Half-high Blueberries for Northern Climates

	Northsky	Northcountry	Northblue	Northland
Yield	1-3 lbs/bush	3-5 lbs/bush	3-8 lbs/bush	3-8 lbs/bush
Plant height	12 - 18"	18 - 24"	24 - 36"	30 - 48"
Plant spread	24 - 30"	24 - 36"	30 - 40"	30 - 40"
Features	Half-high; sweet wild flavor; compact	Half-high; mild wild flavor	Half-high; tart flavor; productive	Half-high; sweet wild flavor; productive
Berry size	Small	Small	X-Large	Medium
Ripening	July	July	July	Late July
Developed at	U of Minn	U of Minn	U of Minn	Michigan State U

Cultivated High-bush Blueberries for Northern Climates

	St. Cloud	Polaris	Chippewa	Patriot
Yield	2-7 lbs/bush	2-7 lbs/bush	3-8 lbs/bush	8-10 lbs/bush
Plant height	30 - 48"	30 - 40"	30 - 40"	48 - 60"
Plant spread	30 - 40"	30 - 60"	30 - 60"	36 - 48"
Features	Sweet flavor	Aromatic flavor; firm texture	Sweet flavor; productive	Fruit slightly flat; sweet flavor; productive
Berry size	Medium	Large	Med-large	Large
Ripening	July	July	Late July	Early
Developed at	U of Minn	U of Minn	U of Minn	USDA/Maine Agriculture Experimental Station

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