

RASPBERRY VARIETIES FOR COLDER REGIONS

Pam Fisher, Berry Crop Specialist, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Simcoe

Ontario has a wide range of climatic and growing conditions. Varieties recommended for general planting can be grown in all regions, but varieties recommended for regional planting are best suited to certain areas. Varieties recommended for trial are newer varieties with little field experience in Ontario on which to base recommendations.

Summer Red Raspberries

Prelude (NY817 x Hilton) was released in New York, in 1998. It ripens very early. It also produces a small late second crop on primocanes. The canes are vigorous with sparse but noticeable spines. The berries are medium in size with moderate firmness, round, mild flavoured, and medium to dark in colour. Prelude is not known for being especially resistant or susceptible to major pests. Its strengths are its earliness (4-5 days ahead of Boyne), however it is somewhat soft with mild flavour. Try some before planting large amounts.

Boyne (Chief x Indian Summer) is an older variety released in Manitoba, 1960. It is still a standard variety in the colder regions of Ontario. Boyne is early, and winter hardy to -36C when it is dormant. It has medium to tall canes, which are spiny with many suckers. Boyne has small to medium berries, somewhat soft flesh and soft skin. Berries are dark in colour with good flavour and good for freezing. This variety is resistant to yellow rust, tolerant of crown gall, very susceptible to anthracnose and susceptible to fire blight. Its strengths are good yields, good flavour and winter hardiness, however, the fruit is small and dark compared to newer varieties. We recommend Boyne for general planting in Ontario, especially colder regions.

Reveille ((Indian Summer x Sunrise) x September), released from Maryland, 1966. It is early, similar in season to Boyne. Canes are vigorous, upright and sucker freely. Berries are large, and bright red with an elongated cup shape. Reveille is not known for being especially resistant or susceptible to major pests. Although Reveille is productive and winter hardy, with larger fruit than Boyne, the fruit is soft. It is acceptable for PYO and roadside markets.

Nova (Southland x Boyne) released from Nova Scotia in 1981. It is early, just a day or two later than Boyne. Canes are hardy, medium-tall with few spines. In addition to the summer crop, Nova produces a small crop on the primocanes in late fall. Berries are medium in size, firm, shiny, dark red, round and uniform in shape. Nova is apparently resistant to some cane diseases and late yellow rust but susceptible to cane botrytis. Although Nova is grown because it has larger and better quality fruit than Boyne, the fruit is rather tart. Another drawback is the tendency for winter injury in eastern and northern Ontario. It is a major variety for Ontario growers, however and recommended for limited planting in central and southern Ontario.

Killarney (Chief x Indian Summer) This variety is a sister to Boyne, and was released from Manitoba in 1961. Fruit ripens about 3 days after Boyne. Canes are short to medium, hardy, spiny, with lots of suckers. Berries are medium in size, bright, light and shiny red. They have good flavour. Killarney is susceptible to anthracnose and mildew. The variety, like Boyne, is productive and winter hardy, but has better fruit quality than Boyne. However, more recently, growers have seen discouraging amounts of cane die-back in spring, apparently winter injury. It is recommended for limited/regional planting.

Titan ((Hilton x (Newburgh x September)) from New York, in 1985. Titan is mid-late in season, about 6 days after Boyne. It has large canes with long laterals, and suckers from crown, making it slower to fill in the rows. These berries are large, firm, dull red in colour with mild flavour. Titan is resistant to raspberry aphid which spreads virus diseases, but it is very susceptible to phytophthora root rot. Growers like Titan because of its large fruit, but the weak collar causes it to settle or collapse in containers after harvest. This variety is not especially winter hardy but is grown for PYO and farm markets in southern Ontario. Recommended for limited planting using plants from tissue-cultured stock.

K81-6 ((0.67-245-01 x (Creston x Willamette)). This unnamed selection is from Nova Scotia. The harvest season is late. The canes are tall canes with some spines. It is winter hardy except in northern Ontario. Berries are large, medium-red colour, with moderately firm fruit, conic in shape with large cavity that causes fruit to settle after harvest. K81-6 is susceptible to leaf curl virus and very susceptible to fire blight. We no longer recommend this variety because of fire blight problems.

Glen Ample comes from SCRI, Scotland, where it was released in 1998. Its complex parentage includes Glen Prosen and Meeker. It is a late variety, upright, vigorous, spine free. Berries are large, firm, fleshy, and dull red in colour and sometimes less cohesive in cold weather. Flavour is bland. This variety is resistant to raspberry aphid, a virus vector, however, it is susceptible virus. Recommended for trial in small quantities. Winter hardiness unknown.

Encore (Canby x Cherokee) from New York, 1998

This is a late variety, with vigorous, nearly spineless canes, and good winter hardiness in New York and Nova Scotia.

Large sized berries are firm with good flavour. No outstanding resistance or susceptibility to pests has been noted so far, although it is apparently susceptible to fire blight. Fruit quality is better than Titan, although white drupelet disorder can be a big problem in some years. Encore is recommended for trial in Ontario.

Tulameen (Nootka x Glen Prosen) from British Columbia in 1990. This variety is very late. Plants have an open growth habit with willowy twisting canes. Berries are large, glossy medium-red, with thick fleshed fruit. Tulameen is relatively susceptible to botrytis fruit rot and spur blight, but resistant to the mosaic virus aphid vector. It has excellent flavour and fruit quality, and a long fruiting season. Unfortunately, Tulameen is very susceptible to winter injury in Ontario, and only grown where we can grow peaches. It is the variety of choice for greenhouse production.

Black and Purple Raspberries

Jewel (Bristol x Dundee) comes from New York (1973). It is the only black raspberry variety grown in Ontario. It is early, several days ahead of Boyne. It is vigorous and considered the hardiest of black raspberry varieties. It has medium sized fruit that is larger than Bristol. These berries are of excellent quality. Jewel is susceptible to botrytis fruit rot and anthracnose cane disease, and more susceptible than red raspberries to verticillium and virus diseases. Jewel is less winter hardy than red raspberries. It is recommended for trial planting in Ontario.

Royalty ((Cumberland x Newburgh) x (Newburgh x Indian Summer)) New York, 1982. Royalty is a late season variety, 11 days after Boyne. Canes are very vigorous, spiny, tall, with many suckers from the roots. Berries are large in size with a dull purple colour and cone-shaped appearance, and a sweet flavour. This variety is susceptible to crown gall, resistant to raspberry aphid. This fruit looks overripe when harvested, and has a small following because the fruit is great for freezing, pies, jam. Royalty is somewhat susceptible to winter injury, and fruit is soft for shipping. Recommended for trial in Ontario.

Fall Bearing (a.k.a. primocane-fruiting) Raspberries

Autumn Britten comes from England, where it was released in 1995 with its sibling Autumn Bliss. It is the early, with harvest beginning in mid-late August, a good 10 days ahead of Heritage. The variety is a sparse cane producer. Fruit is large and has a consistent regular conic shape. Autumn Britten is susceptible to raspberry bushy dwarf virus but resistant to raspberry mosaic virus. The strengths of this variety are its excellent fruit quality, and early harvest compared to Heritage. However, because canes are not abundant, yield can be low. Autumn Britten should be planted at closer spacings than other varieties. Another drawback in spite of great fruit quality is that the colour darkens after harvest, giving fruit an over-ripe appearance on a grocery store shelf. Autumn Britten is recommended for general planting, and is the most commonly grown fall-fruiting variety in Ontario.

Polana (Heritage x Zeva Herbsternte), from Poland, released in 1991. This is another early fall-bearing variety, approximately 2 weeks earlier than Heritage and slightly ahead of Autumn Britten. It has shorter canes than Heritage, but is vigorous. Fruit is medium to large, glossy, cohesive, with good flavour. It seems to have no major problems with pests and diseases. Yields can be high because buds produce 2 fruiting laterals each. Fruit quality is good, although berries may split into doubles. Polana is recommended for limited/regional planting in Ontario and is doing well in eastern Ontario.

Heritage ((Milton x Cuthbert) x Durham)). The standard fall bearing variety, Heritage was released in New York in 1969. It is late, fruiting in early-mid September, which is too late in most of Ontario. Canes are tall, rugged, and thorny. Heritage produces high yields of medium sized and attractive fruit. It has some tolerance to raspberry bushy dwarf virus and raspberry mosaic virus, and is resistant to many pest problems. It is recommended for limited/regional planting in southwestern regions where it seldom freezes until mid October.

Caroline ((A. Bliss x Glen Moy) x Heritage)) from USDA Maryland, 1999. The harvest season is late, about 1 week earlier than Heritage. Vigorous canes may be variable in height, with short laterals. The fruit is large, conical, dark red but otherwise good good quality and good flavour. This variety is very susceptible to late leaf rust. Growers choose Caroline for its excellent yield potential, berry size and fruit quality, but in most of Ontario, the harvest season is too late. Recommended for trial in southwestern regions.

Newer primocane fruiting varieties for trial:

Jaelyn (OBC-fl x Caroline), released from University of Maryland. This variety is early, vigorous, erect. Fruit is large sized, firm, dark red, conical berry. It is susceptible to yellow rust. Another drawback is that the fruit is hard to pick, adhering to the core until fully ripe. Not recommended in Ontario.

Joan J (Joan Squire x Terri-Louise) released in England in 1995. This is an early variety with numerous, relatively spine free canes. The fruit is large, glossy red, conical, and of good quality. Recommended for trial.

Josephine (Amity x Glen Gerry) from University of Maryland. This is a late season variety. Canes are upright and vigorous. Fruit is large, firm cohesive, brighter red than Jaclyn. This variety is resistant to potato leafhopper and phytophthora root rot, mildew, rust, anthracnose, verticillium. It is too late for field production in Ontario but may be of interest in high tunnels.

Polka comes from Poland. Parents include open pollinated seedlings and Autumn Bliss. This is an early fall-fruiting variety, with self supporting semi vigorous canes. The berry is medium to large with excellent fruit quality. The drupelets are consistent in size and fruit is meaty. Polka has a high level of tolerance to fruit and cane botrytis. Although fruit is of excellent quality, it is no lighter in colour than Autumn Britten; both are rather dark for large wholesale markets.

Himbo Top, from Switzerland, is late, very vigorous, and requires a supportive trellis. The large bright red firm fruit, with small drupelets, easy to pick. It has a high yield potential but is not recommended in Ontario, as the fruit ripens too late for outdoor production.