

Planting Elderberry – Care Of Elderberries

<http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/fruits/elderberry/planting-elderberry.htm>

Elderberry (*Sambucus*) is a large bush or shrub that is native to the U.S. and Europe. The bush produces bluish-black fruit in bunches of little berries that are used in wines, juices, jellies and jams. The berries themselves are quite bitter, so they are rarely eaten by themselves.

How to Grow Elderberry Plants

Growing elderberries is not all that difficult. They can tolerate different conditions like soil that is in poor condition or soil that is too wet. One thing growing elderberries cannot tolerate, however, is drought.

When planting elderberry bushes, you should note that the berries will grow on the bushes the first year you plant them. Just remember that the berries will do better the second year.

Elderberry planting is done best on well-drained loamy soil. Sandy soils should be improved by adding a few inches of organic matter.

When elderberry planting, make sure to allow for cross-pollination. Therefore, two or more cultivars can be planted near each other. This allows for the necessary cross-pollination.

When planting elderberry bushes, plant them one meter apart in rows that are four to five meters apart. Make sure you do your elderberry planting early in the spring. After planting, be sure to water them so they get a good start.

Care of Elderberries

After you have done your elderberry planting, you should cultivate once in a while very carefully. You do not want to disturb the roots. Use mulch where necessary to prevent weed growth, and pluck those weeds that manage to sneak through.

When growing elderberries, remember that the bushes require about 25 mm of water a week. Therefore, if summertime comes and you find that you are running into periods of no rain, be sure to water them often.

The first two years after planting elderberry bushes, you should let them grow wildly. Do not prune and do not bother picking the berries. After that, you can prune the elderberry bushes in the early spring by cutting them back and removing all the dead areas. This way, the bushes will grow and produce a lot of berries for you.

Right around mid-August and mid-September, there is a five to 15-day ripening period. Be sure to pick them before the birds do, and enjoy!