Blueberry, Duke

Vaccinium corymbosum 'Duke'



Blueberry, Duke fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4a

Group/Class: Highbush Blueberry

Description:

A common variety loved for its sweetly-flavored light blue fruit in summer and pretty bell-shaped flowers, bushy and often arching, a heavy and early producer; blueberries need highly acidic soil, good drainage and mulch, plant with acid amendment

Edible Qualities

Blueberry, Duke is a medium-sized shrub that is commonly grown for its edible qualities. It produces large clusters of blue round berries which are usually ready for picking from late spring to early summer. The berries have a sweet taste and a juicy texture.

The berries are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Cooking
- Baking
- Preserves



Blueberry, Duke flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Features & Attributes

Blueberry, Duke features dainty clusters of white bell-shaped flowers with shell pink overtones hanging below the branches in mid spring. It has green deciduous foliage. The glossy oval leaves turn an outstanding orange in the fall. It features an abundance of magnificent blue berries from late spring to early summer. The smooth yellow bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

This is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition. This is a relatively low maintenance plant. Each spring, cut back all dead and two-year old canes to the ground, leaving only last year's growth standing. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Blueberry, Duke is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Orchard/Edible Landscaping

Planting & Growing

Blueberry, Duke will grow to be about 6 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. This variety requires a different selection of the same species growing nearby in order to set fruit.



Blueberry, Duke fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This shrub is typically grown in a designated area of the yard because of its mature size and spread. It should be grown in a location with partial shade and which is shaded from the hot afternoon sun. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. To help this plant achive its best flowering performance, periodically apply a flower-boosting fertilizer from early spring through into the active growing season. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have sandy, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selection of a native North American species.

Special Attributes

In the Pacific Northwest Desert blueberry plants prefer afternoon shade, the berries are sweeter too.