

# Southern Highbush Blueberries for the Sacramento Valley!



Choose a location with morning sun or partial shade, where you will be able to provide plenty of water. Plant two varieties for best production; an early and a midseason type will give fruit over several weeks.

**In containers:** mix Potting Soil (or Planting Mix) with Micro Bark or pumice (or both). Add 2 cups soil sulfur per plant and 1 cup Camellia/Azalea fertilizer. 2 – 3 plants can be crowded together in a large tub or barrel.

**In the ground:** amend the soil with several inches of FirMulch and Micro Bark. Add 2 – 4 cups of soil sulfur per plant and 1 – 2 cups Camellia/Azalea fertilizer. Plant 2 varieties 3' apart or more.

'**Bluecrop**' is a **midseason** variety. Medium size fruit with a high sugar content. Plants yield heavily. This Northern highbush variety is tolerant of Valley heat.

'**Jubilee**' upright, fast, hard berries, a regular producer. From the USDA breeding program, actually a North/South hybrid. 500-700 hours chilling\*, a **midseason** variety. Has a reputation as a good producer in less than perfect conditions. Has a tight habit, tends to produce two crops. The fruit is supposed to keep well. Wonderful fall color.

'**Misty**' an **early** variety of narrow, upright habit and great vigor. Does well coastal or inland and has an extended production season. Chill requirement may be as low as 150 hours. Prune heavily to remove old annual wood and lessen overproduction. Commercial growers use trellises on this variety. No real fall color, but this variety has wonderful, very blue foliage. This variety did very well at a trial at the Santa Clara County Ag Extension office. We have seen fruit ripen in early February on the Central Coast. The berries have a rich blueberry flavor. Reluctant fall color, often evergreen in mild winters.

'**O'Neal**' probably the earliest variety, a robust, fast grower. Considered by some to have the best flavor of any of the Southern Highbush types and described as "terrific." Fruit is medium dark blue, medium large, on bushes to about 4' tall. A very early ripener

with chill requirement estimated at 4-500 hours. Has nice pink flowers and great fall color too, purple bronze then bright scarlet red and hot orange over yellow. Local home grower Jerry Stanhoff reports this to be a continuous summer bearer for him, at 800' in the Santa Cruz Mountains, with "great" fruit that are greedily scavenged by his wife and kids before he gets to enjoy almost any. We find fruit ripening on this one even in January, and even after the hard freezes. Gotta like that!

'**Sharpblue**' **early**, really vigorous (up to 6' if very happy), adaptable. Has a reputation for taking soils ranging from clay to light sand. The fruit is very large but must be picked frequently in hot weather or it will overripen. This one has almost no chilling requirement. is almost everbearing on the coast or in Southern California. It did very well at a trial at the Santa Clara County Ag Extension office trial.

'**Southmoon**' (**PP 9834**) **midseason**, a good variety for California, with the main crop ripening around the end of May. Vigorous, upright grower. Very productive, with large, beautiful berries. It only seems to need about 500 hours winter chill. Especially good on well amended soils. Modest fall color, and then only with extended cold weather.

Variety descriptions adapted from Monterey Bay Nursery. \* Note: we average over 800 chilling hours in Davis.