

February 22, 2000

Bramble Information

Winter/Spring Bramble Chores

WINTER/SPRING BRAMBLE CHORES

Here is a brief summary of chores for the next few months to prepare your brambles for the upcoming growing season. If you have any questions give me a call.

PRUNING

-Should be completed by early spring

-Fall Bearing Raspberries: Fall bearing (actually mid to late summer for most of us in NC) raspberries fruit at the top of the current season's canes ("primocanes"). The simplest way to manage these varieties is to mow them off at ground level during the dormant season. Be sure to mow them off close to the ground so that new shoots come from the roots and not from lateral buds on cane stumps.

-Blackberries and summer fruiting raspberries. These types of brambles bear fruit on second year canes. During the winter prune out the spent floricanes from the previous season. The remaining primocanes are thinned 3-4 / ft².

HERBICIDES

-Apply preemergent herbicide in spring if not applied in fall. There are several chemicals that are labeled for use in NC depending on age of planting and time of application, see your NC AG Chem. Manual.

-Apply post emergent herbicides as needed. Be sure that the chemical you are using is labeled for bearing plants, many herbicides cannot be used beyond the first year.

INSECT AND DISEASE CONTROL

PREBLOOM

-Apply liquid lime sulphur or Bordeaux for control of anthracnose in late winter or early spring before new buds are less than 1/2" long

-Crown borers can be a problem in the early spring, as well as aphids, thrips, Japanese beetle, fruitworm, rose chafer, stink bugs and psyllids. Catch these early w/ a prebloom spray, see your NC AG Chem. Manual.

BLOOM:

Double blossom (AKA rosette). Primocanes are infected in the spring or early summer, but disease symptoms are not evident until the following year when new growth begins on the fruiting canes. The best thing to do is to remove the infected floricanes to disrupt the cycle and treat the primocanes w/fungicides. Barbara Smith, USDA plant pathologist has devised an aggressive spray program for this disease in Mississippi, you can contact me for a copy of the paper she wrote for the North American Bramble Growers Association Proceedings. Or go to the web site <http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/1999/991203.htm> for general information.

Botrytis: Apply fungicides at early bloom and repeat at full bloom.

IRRIGATION

-get irrigation ready to go, bramble plants need about 1"-2" water/week

TRELLISES

-Make any last minute repairs before canes start growing

FERTILIZER

-Place nitrogenous fertilizers in row before new canes emerge in spring. Raspberries: Apply 500-800 lbs of 10-10-10 per acre in split applications. Apply half in Feb-March and the remainder in April-May. Spread uniformly across the row or side dress with half on each side of row in a 3 foot wide band.

Blackberries: In established plantings apply 60 to 80 lb/acre N. Nitrogen can be applied in split or single applications. If using a split application, apply the first portion at bud break and the remainder just after harvest. Ammonium nitrate is the most common form of N used on blackberries. The incorporation of P and K should be based on soil test recommendations, see table below.

P level - Action - Form

<50 lb/acre - Add 60-80 lb/acre P205 - Triple superphosphate

>50 lb/acre - None

K level - Action - Form

< 150 lb/acre - Add 60 lb/acre K2O - Potassium sulfate

250-300lb/acre - Add 30 lb/acre - Potassium sulfate

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