



Growing Currants and Gooseberries

Most varieties of currants and gooseberries (*Ribes*) are still prohibited in New Hampshire because they serve as the alternate host for white pine blister rust, a serious disease of white pine. However, several blister rust resistant currant and gooseberry varieties are now available. *Growers may plant these resistant varieties only with permission from the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands.*

To apply for a permit and receive a list of permitted varieties, contact the Division of Forests and Lands, P.O.Box 1856, Concord, NH, 03302-1856.

Culture

Currants and gooseberries do not thrive if summer temperatures are too high, so they are well adapted to New Hampshire. Generally hardy throughout the state, these plants do best where the growing season is 110 days or longer. Since spring frosts are a concern, gooseberries and currants should be grown on a site that is slightly elevated above surrounding land.

Although they will do well in a wide range of soils, currants and gooseberries do best in well-drained loam soils rich in organic matter with a pH around 6.5. Prepare soil well to improve your chances for success. Proper soil preparation should include eradicating perennial weeds, preferably by growing a cover crop such as Japanese millet or Sudan grass the summer before planting. Fertilize the cover crop with 2.5 lb./100 sq. ft. of 10-10-10 or its equivalent.

Plant currants and gooseberries in early spring when the danger of hard frost has passed and mulch with an inch or two of wood chips, bark or pine needles to conserve moisture, suppress weeds and help keep soil cool. This mulch layer should eventually be maintained about 3 inches deep.

Pruning

Red currants and gooseberries fruit primarily on short fruiting branches called *spurs* on 2-year old wood. Black currants fruit primarily on 1-year old wood.

Prune gooseberries and currants at planting by cutting all canes (upright shoots) back by half, then prune the plants annually. To prune, thin canes, leaving a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4-year old canes. A total of 12 to 16 canes is a good number for a mature plant.

For red currants and gooseberries, cut last year's growth in half. For black currants leave last year's growth unpruned.



Currants

Pollination Requirements

Red currants and gooseberries are *self-fruitful* – a single plant or variety will produce fruit without pollination from a different plant; **however, cross pollination will usually result in bigger crops and larger fruit.** **Many** black currants are *self-sterile* – plant at least 2 different varieties of black currants to ensure good fruit set.

Recommended Varieties

At this time, recommended varieties are limited. A list of approved varieties and nurseries where they can be purchased is included at the end of this fact sheet. All varieties on the approved list are resistant to white pine blister rust.

Harvesting and using currants and gooseberries

Currants are harvested as clusters (like grapes) to maintain highest post-harvest quality. Harvest gooseberries as individual fruits. If you will not consume or process currants and gooseberries within a day or so of harvest, refrigerate them to insure maximum storage life. For best quality, however, use fruits as soon as possible after harvest.



Gooseberries

State of New Hampshire
2009 List of Dealers for Approved Resistant Ribes

Black Currants

Consort
Coronet
Crandall
Crusader
Lowe's Auslese (Added in 2009)
Polar (Added in 2009)
Titania
Willoughby (Added in 2009)

Red Currants

Rondom

White Currants

Black Currant-Gooseberry Crosses

Josta

Gooseberries

Captivator (Added in 2009)
Careless (Added in 2009) Clark (Added in 2009)
Crown Bob (Added in 2009)
Downing (Added in 2009)
Howards Lancer (Added in 2009)
Jahns Prairie
Sabine (Added in 2009)
White Currant 1301

Written by UNH Fruit Specialist William Lord, revised 2/09
Photos: USDA Watercolor Collection

Visit our website: ceinfo.unh.edu

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State of New Hampshire
2009 List of Dealers for Approved Resistant Ribes

BLACK CURRANTS

'Consort'

Edible Landscaping Online	Forest Farm	Indiana Berry
Miller Nurseries	Nature Hills Nursery	Rolling River Nursery
Weeks Berry Nursery	Whitman Farms	

'Coronet'

Forest Farm	Whitman Farms	
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'Crandall'

Edible Landscaping Online	Forest Farm	High Country Gardens
One Green World	Raintree Nursery	Rolling River Nursery
Weeks Berry Nursery	Whitman Farms	

'Crusader'

Indian Berry	Rolling River Nursery	
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'Lowe's Auslese'

(Added to list in 2009)

No Sources Found		
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'Polar'

(Added to list in 2009)

No Sources Found		
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'Titania'

McGinnis Berry Crop.	Raintree Nursery	Rolling River Nursery
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'Willoughby'

(Added to list in 2009)

Whitman Farms		
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RED CURRANTS

'Rondom'

Whitman Farms	Victoriana Nursery Garden	
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WHITE CURRANTS

'White Currant 1301'

Whitman Farms		
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BLACK CURRANT-GOOSEBERRY CROSSES

'Josta'

Gurney's Seed & Nursery	Miller Nurseries	One Green World
Raintree Nursery	Rolling River Nursery	Weeks Berry Nursery
Whitman Farms	Victoriana Nursery Garden	

GOOSEBERRIES

'Captivevator'

Raintree Nursery	Weeks Berry Nursery	Whitman Farms
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'Careless'

(Added to list in 2009)

Whitman Farms		
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'Clark'

(Added to list in 2009)

Whitman Farms		
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'Crown Bob'

(Added to list in 2009)

Whitman Farms		
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'Downing'

(Added to list in 2009)

No Sources Found		
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'Howards Lancer'

(Added to list in 2009)

Whitman Farms		
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'Jahns Prairie'

McKeone Orchard & Nursery	Raintree Nursery	Rolling River Nursery
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Whitman Farms		
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'Sabine'

(Added to list in 2009)

No Sources Found		
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Directory for all Sources listed for all Ribes species

Edible Landscaping Online

361 Spirit Ridge Lane, Afton, VA 22920
Orders: (800) 524-4156

Fax: (434) 361-1916

<http://www.ediblelandscaping.com>

Forest Farm

990 Tetherow Road, Williams, OR 97544-9599
Phone Orders: (541) 846-7269
<http://www.forestfarm.com>

Fax Orders: (541) 846-6963

Email: plants@forestfarm.com

Gurney's Seed & Nursery Co.

PO Box 4178, Greendale, IN 47025-4178
Phone Orders: (513) 354-1491

Fax Orders: (513) 354-1493

<http://gurneys.com>

High Country Gardens

2902 Rufina Street, Santa Fe, NM 87507-2929
Phone Orders: (800) 925-9387

Fax Orders: (800) 925-0097

<http://www.highcountrygardens.com>

Indiana Berry & Plant Co.

5218 W. 500 S., Huntingburg, IN 47542
Phone Orders: (800) 295-2226

<https://indianaberry.com>

McGinnis Berry Crop

3583 Dove Creek Road, Courtenay, B.C., Canada V9J 1P3
Phone Orders: (250) 338-8200
<http://www.berrycrops.net>

Fax Orders: (250) 338-1678

Email: mcginnis@berrycrops.net

McKeone Orchard & Nursery

709 North Hollow Road, Coudersport, PA 16915
Phone Orders: (814) 274-7715
<http://www.mckeeonenursery.com/>

Email: mckeeonenursery@yahoo.com

Miller Nurseries

5060 West Lake Road, Canandaigua, NY 14424-8904
Phone Orders: (800) 836-9630
<http://millernurseries.com/>

Email: info@millernurseries.com

Nature Hills Nursery, Inc.

3334 North 88th Plaza, Omaha, NE 68134
Phone Orders: (402) 934-8116
<http://www.naturehills.com/>

Fax Orders: (402) 991-0778

Email: info@NatureHills.com

One Green World

28696 S. Cramer Road, Molalla, Oregon 97038-8576
Phone Orders: (877) 353-4028

Fax Orders: (800) 418-9983

<http://www.onegreenworld.com>

Raintree Nursery

391 Butts Road, Morton, WA 98356
Phone Orders: (360) 496-6400

Fax Orders: (888) 770-8358

<http://www.raintreenursery.com>

Rolling River Nursery

PO Box 332, Orleans, CA 95556
Phone Orders: (530) 627-3120

Fax Orders: (530) 627-3120

<http://www.rollingrivernursery.com>

Victoriana Nursery Garden

Buck Street, Challock, Ashford Kent, TN25 4DG. UK
Phone: +44 (0)1233-740529

Fax: +44 (0)1233-740030

<http://www.victoriananursery.co.uk>

Weeks Berry Nursery

6494 Windsor Island Road, Keizer, OR, 97303
Phone Orders: (503) 393-8112
<http://www.weeksberry.com>

Email: plants@weeksberry.com

Whitman Farms

3995 Gibson Rd NW, Salem, OR 97304
Phone Orders: (503) 585-8728
<http://www.whitmanfarms.com>

Fax Orders: (503) 363-5020

E-mail: lucile@whitmanfarms.com

Anyone wishing to cultivate those Ribes species listed above where plant stock sources cannot be found may contact the NCGR Corvallis Ribes Catalog at: <http://www.ars-grin.gov/cor/catalogs/ribespec.html>