



Prune Fruit at the Right Time

George Hamilton, Extension Field Specialist

The following dates are guidelines for pruning small and tree fruits. Following these guidelines will help reduce the risk of damage due to cold injury. If the extended weather forecast is calling for temperatures below 0°F, stop pruning three to four days before to the cold spell. Wait two to three days after the temperature returns to above 10°F to resume pruning.

Apple

February to April: Prune before start of growth.

Blueberry

March to April: Prune before growth begins.

Cherry

March to April: Prune before start of growth.

Grape

March to early April: Prune vines before new growth begins. When grape vines are pruned on warm spring days, sap may flow at pruning cuts. This is normal and not a cause for concern.

Peach and Nectarine

March to late April: Prune before blossoms show color.

Plum

March to April: Prune before start of growth.

Pear

February to April: Prune before growth begins.

Fall-bearing Raspberry

March to early April: Remove all canes before growth starts.

Summer-bearing Raspberry

March to early April: Prune before growth starts; thin canes to 8 to 10 per foot of row and prune any winter-killed tips of the fruiting canes.

July to early August: Remove old fruiting canes immediately after the crop has been harvested.

Black Raspberry

March to early April: Before new growth begins, prune side shoots to a length of 10 to 12 inches or shorter if plants are not vigorous.

Late May to late June: Thin new shoots and pinch back or cut off to a height of 24 to 30 inches from the ground.

July to August: Remove old fruiting canes immediately after crop has been harvested.

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About the Author

George Hamilton is an Extension Field Specialist in Food & Agriculture for the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. George has direct responsibilities working with commercial farm operations in the areas of vegetables, fruit crops, and Integrated Pest Management.

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