

GRAPES



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Grapes prefer a sunny area with well-drained soil. Low spots where early frosts may occur should be avoided. The plants are self-fertile so it is not necessary to plant two varieties.

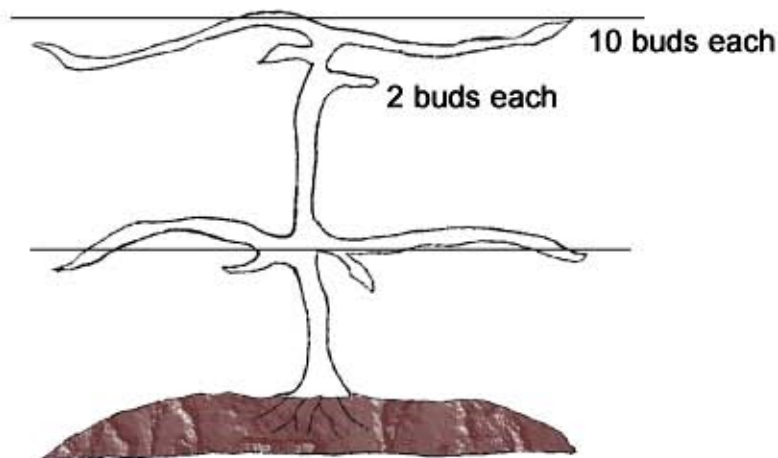
The vines are planted 8" apart and cut back to 2-3 buds at the time of planting. Do not fertilize at this time. Grapes are very susceptible to over-fertilization and weed killers.

Do not harvest grapes until they have vine-ripened. Use netting to protect the fruit from birds.

Use a dormant oil spray in the spring before the leaves open. Also spray with Mal-A-Cide or Eight later in the summer to control leaf-eating insects. Spray with Bordeaux mixture just before and after bloom to reduce black rot disease. Fertilize established plants with a high nitrogen fertilizer in early spring in a band about 2" from the base of the plant.

For winter protection, take the vine off the trellis, bend it over, and cover with about 6" of straw. Uncover and tie canes back onto the trellis in the spring as soon as the buds break dormancy.

Grapes need severe pruning every year except the first year. After cutting the new vine back to 2-4 buds at time of planting, let the plant grow that year. This will provide foliage for root development. During the very early spring of the second year, begin training the vine by selecting a vigorous, long shoot to become the permanent main trunk. Encourage this shoot to grow upwards. Four other shoots coming off of this main shoot will be fastened horizontally to a trellis. The best fruit is borne on shoots that grow during the current growing season from canes that developed the previous year (lighter bark). Each year, save 4-6 of these one-year-old canes, shortening them so there ends up being about 30 buds on the plant. Select 4 other one-year-old canes near the trunk and cut them back to 2 buds (they will be next year's bearing wood). Cut away all else.



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