

Bramble Nutrition

Juanita Popenoe, Extension Specialist, Small Fruit

A preplant soil test is recommended so that nutrients and pH can be adjusted before planting. Brambles prefer a pH of approximately 6.5. Lime should be added for soils with a lower pH and sulfur for soils with a higher pH. During the year before planting, all perennial weeds should be removed and any necessary lime, sulfur, potassium, phosphorus or magnesium worked into the soil in the fall. Preplant cover crops such as buckwheat, hairy vetch, annual ryegrass or sudan grass are recommended to supply organic matter, suppress weeds and reduce erosion. Fertilizer should not be applied to the newly planted plants until they are several weeks old. Table 1 below gives the average fertilizer requirements for older plants. Application should be made in early spring, or split (March and May) for primocane-fruiting types or on sandy soils. For further information on Bramble culture, contact your extension agent.

Table 1: Estimates of the nitrogen requirements (lb./A) for brambles.

Bramble Type	Year	Irrigated			Nonirrigated		
		Sand	Loam	Clay	Sand	Loam	Clay
Primocane-fruiting annual fall crop only	1	40	30	25	35	30	25
	2	80	70	60	70	65	50
	3+	120	100	90	90	80	70
Summer-bearing reds, thornless blackberries	1	35	30	25	30	25	25
	2	55	50	45	45	40	35
	3+	80	70	60	60	50	40
Summer-bearing black and purple raspberries, thorny blackberries	1	30	25	25	25	20	20
	2	45	40	35	35	30	25
	3+	60	50	45	45	40	30

Table adapted from Bramble Production Guide, Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service, Marvin Pritts and David Handley (eds). 1989.

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