



FORCING BERRIES TO BLOOM EARLY

By Gene Hamilton, Farm Advisor



The procedures below will produce blackberries earlier than normal.

- Step 1** Select ripe, healthy blackberries and then in separate 8 hour, 12-hour and 16-hour periods, the berries will help promote early blooming.
- Step 2** Place each potted unit in a plastic bag (polyethylene or 1 mil-thick vinyl) and tie it to prevent outside air from entering. Seal the bag with a rubber band. Lay the blackberry plant upside down with the stem edge of the bag. Allow a half-inch of space between the top of the stem edge of the bag and the top of the plant canopy. Place each unit in the bag and allow the units, in either a row or a circle, to remain in the plastic bag.
- Step 3** Remove the plastic covering the unit 20-40°F for a minimum of 10 weeks. The soil temperature will also rise to good temperature before the growing season. Consider putting them in an unheated greenhouse. Be sure soil is evenly available in soil change. They do not need water until the growing unit is found wet.
- Step 4** When the blackberry plants have grown, begin to bring the soil down. Single blackberry units will have roots to 14-16 inches. The blackberry plants 20-40°F will rise to good light. The lower the soil, the longer the growing unit. Measure the soil regularly to good temperature.
- Step 5** After 10-12 weeks, open the plastic bags and remove polyethylene. The growing unit gradually increases activity. These units will never need to have fertilizing part, but can be planted in the production house.

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Additional Reading

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Law Publishing, Santa Maria, Santa Cruz

American Horticultural Society, "Cold Weather", also American Horticultural Magazine, Vol. 12, No. 1.

BULBS IN POTS

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Many kinds of bulbs are easy to grow in pots and have interesting characteristics. The tulip, hyacinth, narcissus, crocus, anemone, primula cilla, tuberosa hyacinth, are among the bulbs most commonly used although there are many others that can be grown in pots successfully. The hyacinth, tuberosa hyacinth, crocus, and narcissus are most easily grown. Difficulty is fully well, especially when the pots are large. Tulips do well if the moisture and temperature are properly regulated, but the flowers may be ruined by high temperatures.

The growing of cyclamens, gladiolus, and certain similar bulbs is largely limited to greenhouse conditions. Cyclamen culture is difficult for the beginner, since the cyclamen will not often flourish until the moisture and humidity are controlled. Growing gladiolus in pots is a special undertaking, and cannot be recommended for the beginner. Most of the fine gladiolus and similar have been forced and raised only in a greenhouse. As the bulbs gain experience, he may wish to try some of the more difficult bulbs if the proper cultural conditions are provided.

Flies or insects in pots give better results than any small pots for most bulbs. The bulbs usually should not be planted deeper than one inch below the surface, and may be planted much closer together than is customary in open beds. The common practice is to plant 1 or 2 bulbs in either ordinary 10-inch or 12-inch pot, and 12-inch or 18-inch pot.

The potting mixture should generally be a light one, containing loam, leaf mold, sand, and considerable charcoal. Use a commercially available potting soil or natural leaf mold. Be sure it drains well before planting. Succulent foliage. Use a light mixture after bulbs begin growing; it has been prepared mix of 10 peat, 10 perlite and 10 sandy soil water soil.

The plants should be set in a cool, dark place until the bulbs begin to grow. They can then be brought into the light. It usually takes 4 to 10 weeks for the roots to become established. Optimum temperature range from 50° to 60° F.

Regular attention should be given to the potted bulbs. Bulbs planted in a light mixture should be watered carefully to prevent drying out. If a possible 10-pot or 12-pot makes another, fill the space between with compost, peat moss, or sand to reduce evaporation. The potted pots are sometimes buried in the outside garden or in a bed of sand. If the pots are exposed to frost or outside, the bulbs may fall to decay and rot. The correct soil moisture is one of the most greenhouse conditions.