Blueberries-Rabbiteye (commercial) (*Code* #126)

Soil Test Rating	Potassium			
	Low K Coast: 0-70 lbs/A Pied: 0-70 lbs/A	**Medium K** Coast: 71-120 lbs/A Pied: 71-150 lbs/A	**High K** Coast: 121-275 lbs/A Pied: 151-275 lbs/A	**Very High K** Coast: 275+ lbs/A Pied: 275+ lbs/A
Phosphorus	*Recommended Pounds N-$P_2 0_5$-$K_2 0$ per Acre*			
Low P Coast: 0-30 lbs/A Pied: 0-20 lbs/A	*-75-75	*-75-40	*-75-0	*-75-0
Medium P Coast: 31-60 lbs/A Pied: 21-40 lbs/A	*-40-75	*-40-40	*-40-0	*-40-0
High P Coast: 61-100 lbs/A Pied: 41-75 lbs/A	*-0-75	*-0-40	*-0-0	*-0-0
Very High P Coast: 100+ lbs/A Pied: 75+ lbs/A	*-0-75	*-0-40	*-0-0	*-0-0

Coast = Coastal Plain Pied = Piedmont, Mountain, and Limestone Valley

Recommendations:

Recommended pH:	Coastal Plain: 4.0 to 5.0 Piedmont: 4.2 to 5.2
Magnesium:	If soil test Mg level is low and lime is recommended, use dolomitic limestone; if soil test Mg is low and lime is not recommended, apply 125 pounds magnesium sulfate (Epsom salts) per acre.
Sulfur:	If soil pH is greater than 5.3, sulfur will be recommended to decrease soil pH to the sufficient range. If sulfur is applied prior to planting, apply the recommended amount at least six months before planting and mix it into the soil thoroughly to a depth of 6 to 8 inches. If sulfur is recommended for an established crop, apply broadcast no more than 300 pounds of sulfur per acre. Do not apply sulfur when the foliage is wet.
Important:	Read comments on Fact Sheet when preparing fertilizer recommendations.

Coastal Plain	Low: 0 - 60 lbs/acre	Medium: 61 - 120 lbs/acre	High: >120 lbs/acre
Piedmont	Low: 0 - 120 lbs/acre	Medium: 121 - 240 lbs/acre	High: >240 lbs/acre

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Fact Sheet:

If pH is less than 4, then 100 pound of lime per acre should be broadcast for every 0.1 pH increase that is desired to a maximum of 700 pounds per acre.
If the soil test calcium (Ca) level exceeds 900 pounds per acre or if the soil test phosphorus level is greater than 200 pounds per acre the site is not well suited for blueberries without special care.
If soil organic matter is less than 2%, use liberal quantities of peat moss or milled or ground (fine) pine bark mixed with the soil when planting. Following planting mulch heavily with pine bark, rotted pine sawdust, or pine straw if practical.
If soil test phosphorus (P) is less than 20 pounds per acre, apply 300 pounds of 0-46-0 per acre preplant and incorporate in the top 6 to 8 inches of soil to raise available P to a level needed by rabbiteye blueberries.

First Year After Planting
Apply 1 ounce of 10-10-10 per plant in March, May, July, and September (skip September in north Georgia). Spread the fertilizer evenly in a circle 18 inches in diameter with the plant in the center. **Do not pile the fertilizer around the base of the bush.** At a plant spacing of 5 by 12 feet (726 plant per acre) this will require 45 pounds of fertilizer per acre. A minimum of 4 inches of rain or overhead irrigation should be received between fertilizer applications.

Succeeding Years-Standard hand applied rabbiteye fertilizer program with two to four applications per year
If you are obtaining good growth (a foot or more per year) increase your fertilizer amount in accordance with Table 1. However, base your application on plant size, not age. It is very important not to over fertilize small plants. On second year plants fertilize at bud break, May, July, and September (skip Sept. in North Georgia). On bushes three years and four years old which are in production, fertilize at bud break, May (optional) and after harvest in August. On bushes five years old and older, fertilize at bud break and after harvest in August. Diameter of the area fertilized should be approximately equal to the height of the bush. By the fifth year, the fertilizer may be applied in the row (banded application).

When the plants are six years old, or six feet high, they are considered to be mature and you should be at your peak fertilization rate. Note: Fertilizers low in phosphorus (12-4-8, 16-4-8, or 21-0-0 (ammonium sulfate)) should be used only on fields with high and very high phosphorus levels.

Table 1. Rabbiteye blueberry hand applied fertilization with 10-10-10, 12-4-8, 16-4-8, 14-28-14, or ammonium sulfate. Years two through five.

Age of Plant	Plant Height	Plant Diameter	Amount of fertilizer per plant per application-use soil test to determine which material to use					Applications Per Year
1st year	1 foot		(See previous recommendations)					
			10-10-10	12-4-8	16-4-8	14-28-14	Ammonium sulfate (summer application if no P and K needed)	
2nd year	2 feet	24"	1.5 oz.	1.2 oz.	0.93 oz.	1.1 oz.	0.71 oz.	3 or 4
3rd year	3 feet	30"	3.0 oz.	2.5 oz.	1.9 oz.	2.1 oz.	1.4 oz.	2 or 3
4th year	4 feet	36"	4.5 oz.	3.7 oz.	2.8 oz.	3.2 oz.	2.1 oz.	2 or 3
5th year	5 feet	42"	6 oz.	5 oz.	3.75 oz.	4.3 oz.	2.9 oz.	2
6th year+	6 feet	48"	8 oz.	6.7 oz.	5.0 oz.	5.7 oz.	3.8 oz.	2

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Blueberries-Rabbiteye (commercial) (*Code* #126) continued

Fertilizing rabbiteye blueberries years five and older with banded applications based on row spacing and plant density

Based on soil samples select the common type of fertilizer that best suits your plant needs or have a custom blend prepared. If you want to fertilize without a soil test, the suggested analysis is 10-10-10.

Multiply the ounces per plant in Table 1 with the number of plants per acre. (If the field is planted 5 by 12 = 726 plants per acre, if the field is planted 6 by 12 = 608 plants per acre). Divide by 16 ounces per pound to obtain pounds of fertilizer per acre. For example 6 ounces times 726 plants per acre = 4356 divided by 16 = 272 pounds of fertilizer per acre. Spread the fertilizer in a band four feet in diameter centered on the plant row. Banded applications can also be use in years two and three but double the amount of fertilizer recommended for hand applications since much of the fertilizer will be lost. Banded applications in year four should be 50% more than hand applications (multiply by 1.5).

***Nitrogen recommendation:**

For mature bushes, as a general recommendation, 60 pounds of nitrogen should be applied per acre, half at bud break and half immediately after harvest. Organic or slow-release nitrogen sources such as is found in certain lawn fertilizer formulations are excellent nitrogen sources for blueberries. Part of the nitrogen is readily available while part is available in small amounts over a longer period. However, since such sources of nitrogen are quite expensive, it is suggested that these nitrogen sources be applied individually to bushes.

Soils vary in their natural ability to supply the plant available forms of nitrogen (N). The N fertilizer recommendations given here are based on soils with 1 to 2% organic matter (OM). Soils with higher OM (4 to 6% OM) generally supply more N; therefore, less N fertilizer is needed on high OM soils. Likewise, be aware of conditions that may increase the need for additional N. On new plantings to which pine bark has been added (especially pine bark with white wood), additional N fertilizer may be needed to overcome N tie-up by bacteria. Sufficient nitrogen should be applied to grow good lateral fruit wood 5 to 8 inches in length. However, do not add too much nitrogen because it may lead to growth of highly succulent shoots that are susceptible to Botryosphaeria stem blight. In general, N should not be applied after early September in South Georgia or mid-August in North Georgia. Nitrogen fertilizer is used more efficiently if added through drip irrigation systems; therefore, recommended N rates may be reduced by about 20%. Because of these many complex factors, we recommend plant tissue analysis and grower observations as the most reliable guide for adjusting the rate of N fertilizer to apply. For more information on plant analysis, go to http://aesl.ces.uga.edu/publications/plant/.

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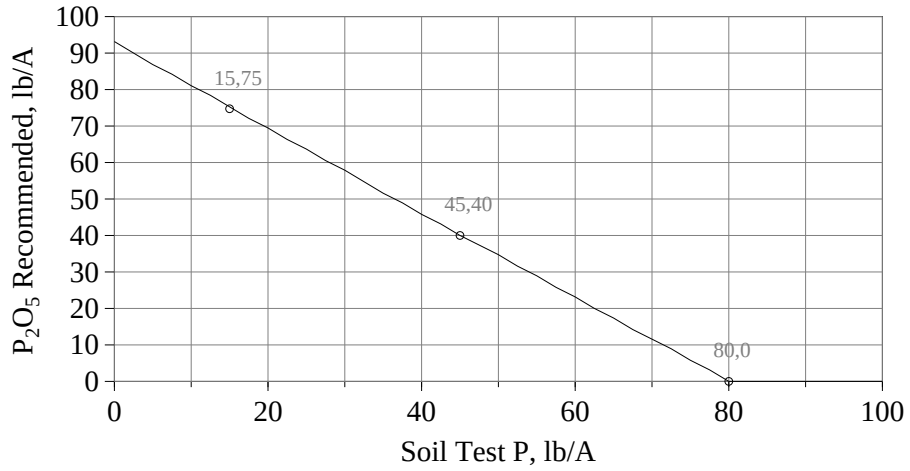
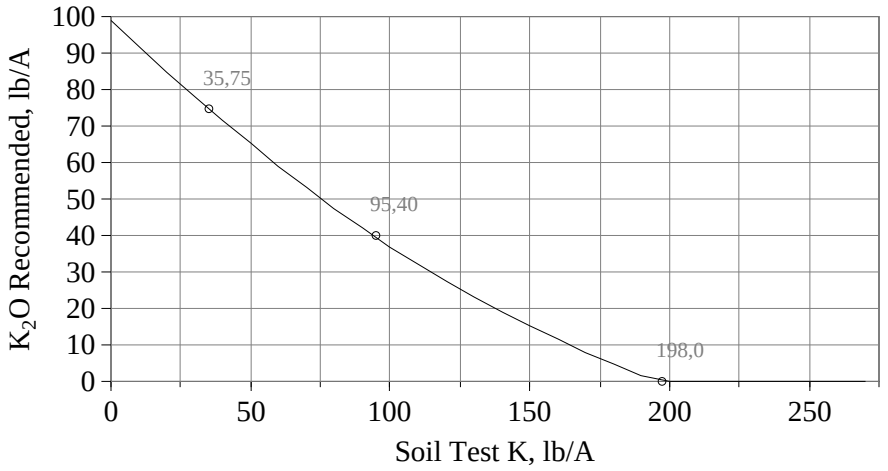
P Recommendations, Coastal Plain

$P_2O_5 = 93 - 1.189P + 0.00037P^2$



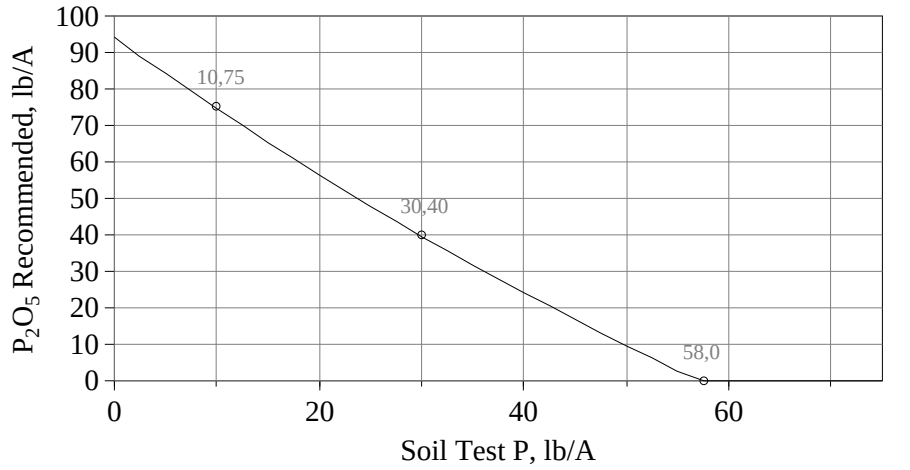
K Recommendations, Coastal Plain

$K_2O = 99 - 0.738K + 0.00119K^2$



P Recommendations, Piedmont

$P_2O_5 = 94 - 1.999P + 0.00622P^2$



K Recommendations, Piedmont

$K_2O = 93 - 0.529K + 0.00043K^2$