

Latin Name/Genus: *Lonicera caerulea*

Family: *Caprifoliaceae*

Difficulty: Easy; requires cross-pollination with unrelated cultivar

Season: Cool season (spring/fall)

Exposure: Full-sun or partial-shade

Zone: Between Zones 2-9



Timing: Also known as 'Honeyberries', the best time to plant Haskap is in fall (for root development), although spring plantings of dormant plants may grow just as well. Plant is winter-hardy, tolerating temperatures below -47°C, with frost-tolerant flowers, and tend to be more tolerant of wet conditions than most fruit species.

Starting: For most cultivars, planting 90-120cm (3-4') apart in rows 2-3m (6-10') apart should be sufficient. Immediately after planting, thoroughly wet and disturb the soil to remove any air pockets that may remain around the roots; ensure soil remains moist, but not overly so, especially during establishment.

Days to Maturity: From transplant date.

Growing: Aim for a pH level of 5.5-6.5, although can survive with soil acidity levels between 3.9-8. Ensure soil remains wet, deep waterings every few days encourages deep root development moreso than frequent shallow waterings; not drought-resistant. Small, cream/yellow coloured blossoms emerge in early spring and can withstand spring frosts down to -7°C (19°F). Haskaps require cross-pollination with a unrelated cultivar/different variety (in order to produce fruit, two or more varieties are recommended).

Nutrient Preferences: Soil full of organic matter that drains well works best. Nitrogen fertilizers are recommended for spring application [but discouraged after that time, as rapid growth late in the growing season can make the plant more susceptible to winter injury]; haskaps benefit from general, balanced fertilizer application of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium in spring.

Harvest: Haskaps won't produce many berries the first few years, however production will increase by the third or fourth year; fruit begins to change colour late May/early June, and is ready for harvest a few weeks later (early-mid June; if still green inside, they are not ripe yet). Depending on the cultivar, dark blue fruits are produced, ranging from round to oblong, tart to sweet, and between 1-5cm (½ - 2") in length. Require annual pruning to encourage new growth, with late winter recommended as the best time (while bushes are still dormant).

Companion Planting: Haskaps make great companions for orchard trees, and berry bushes, eggplants, and chives, often offering great plot bordering; not recommended with plants of the same genus due to self-incompatibility.