

We offer THREE forms of cane-berry plants:

(1) Dormant Cuttings are the form of plants typically *used by nurseries* for field propagation purposes. Cuttings are multiple node sections of juvenile (current seasons) canes, taken from mother plants and either "stuck" immediately into properly prepared beds in late fall, or stored at near freezing temperatures with proper humidity and stuck in early spring. This is the most economical form we offer, but requires more knowledge and special care to get the desired results.

(2) Actively growing MaxiPlugs can be planted outdoors any time from early spring after danger of frost is past until the end of summer and even very early fall - provided the plants are available. A dramatic presentation of the power of these plants, their capacity to grow and produce an early crop (14 months), and largely out-compete weeds can be seen at Natura Farms / Berry Communications with their July 2013 elderberry planting.

Obviously the earlier in the season one can plant these, the longer growing period they will have and the greater their development will be. But growers and farmers are often very, very busy in the spring, and sometime the weather simply does not cooperate to prepare the fields and transplant crops, as happened in the 2014 and 2013 springs: continuous rains, fields too wet to work. MaxiPlug plants enable farmers to transplant them at their convenience, rather than having to get them into the ground in very early spring, as is required with dormant, bare root plants.

(3) Bare root plants are the typical plant forms sold to berry growers. Ours, however, are distinctly different than those of the nursery industry as a whole. Nurseries worldwide dig their plants in late fall after they are dormant... just as we did decades ago. Most of the root mass is removed at digging and/or at grading time. These plants are then stored in plant coolers at a high relative humidity and at temperatures just below freezing. "Dormant" means these plants are not actively growing and live a bit like a hibernating bear. They are alive and still metabolize and respire, using up energy. The longer they remain in cold storage, the weaker they become, the less energy they have to get established.

We dig ours in early spring (install of fall), usually with the growers participating in the dig while we explain how to best care for them. This gives everyone FRESH plants that have overwintered in their natural environment, i.e., out of doors in the soil (field). Whether lifting (digging) them by hand or machine, we are able to retain the mass of roots with each plant, typically sending a substantial amount of our high-organic, living soil with each plant. This typically results in plants that practically function as though they were potted plants (but potted plants typically cost twice as much or more to produce).

Bottom line: growers get a LOT more value that becomes apparent once these plants are in their new fields and are properly maintained. Their rapid growth also helps with weed control, as they will shade out many potential weeds much sooner than comparable dormant bare root plants.

Though at one time we shipped a wide variety of berry plants worldwide, we currently only work with currants (4 colors, many cultivars) and elderberries (5 cultivars), anticipating the addition of Aronia shortly. Please check with us as far in advance as possible for the availability of the specific berry type, cultivar and form you anticipate using. We are open to propagating to match your specific needs. Ordering early is always preferable and typically assures you get what you want. Also, if ordered by November 1, we've been giving growers a 10% discount for early orders, as well as required only a 10% deposit with the orders, rather than 25%.