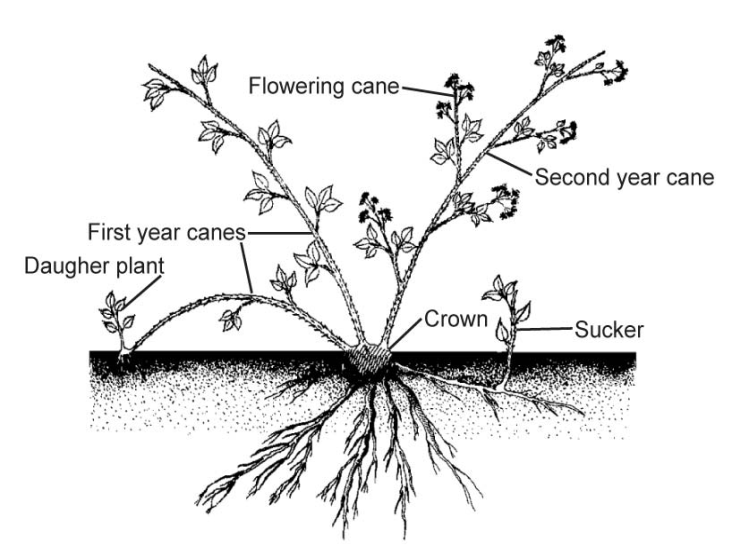
**2. A Berry of History about the Blackberry and Raspberry**

* The **American red raspberry** *(Rubus idaeus L.)* **and blackberry (***Rubus L.***) are** **native North American species** that also grow across northern Europe to northwestern Asia.
* The American red raspberry provides food and cover for many wildlife species. **South Dakota grouse**, birds, raccoons, coyotes, squirrels, skunks, and chipmunks **eat the fruits**.
* The entire raspberry plant was used by American Indians to treat a number of illnesses. **Raspberry roots, leaves and bark were all used to treat different ailments of the digestive and intestinal tracts.** Roots were used to treat diarrhea while raspberry leaf tea was used as a diuretic and to calm nausea and vomiting.
* Even though blackberries have been enjoyed by people for many years, it was not a commercial crop until the 1920s when a thornless blackberry plant was found. This plant made picking the blackberries easy enough that the berries could be sold for profit.

**3. How do Blackberries and Raspberries Grow?**

* **Blackberries, as with other animal-pollinated flowering plants**, including raspberries, provide a popular example of the harmony in nature. **The blackberry flowers provide a nectar source for bees, while the bees carry out pollination, allowing the plants to produce fruit.** The plants also provide an important service for other members of the ecosystem, providing black bears, birds, and other animals with food, and offering both culinary and medicinal values for humans.
* Raspberries and blackberries are perennial fruit-bearing brambles with biennial canes. The plants produce canes (“suckers”) from buds on the crown and on underground lateral stems. These canes grow during the first season and produce fruit during the summer of the second year, while new canes emerge to provide a crop for the next year. Second-year canes die shortly after fruiting. First-year canes have green stems, while second-year canes have a thin, brown bark covering them.
* Raspberries grow well cool summer and mild winter conditions. In the US **Washington state has the best growing** conditions and leads the US in raspberry production.
* Blackberries and raspberries are members of the rose family. They are called *aggregate fruits* because each berry is a cluster of tiny fruits called *drupelets*. Each drupelet has a seed. Raspberries have a hollow center when picked since the receptacle remains on the cane. Blackberry drupelets remain centered around the core even after the berry is picked. When we eat a blackberry fruit, we consume the receptacle of the inflorescence (or cluster) called a *torus*.

**4. What season do we pick Blackberries and Raspberries?**

* In South Dakota, blackberries and raspberries are in peak season in the summer. Frozen berries are available year round. Visit a local farmers’ market to ask about the berry season in your area.

**5. Why should we eat Blackberries and Raspberries?**

* Berries are high in proanthocyanins the bioflavanoid pigments that protect our cardiovascular systems from destruction by reactive oxygen species (ROS)(**antioxidants**).
* Berries are not only delicious; they are the fountain of youth as they prevent heart disease and protect us from inflammation!
* From a botanical standpoint, berries naturally have to be full of antioxidants because otherwise they would not be able to protect themselves from the sun. The leaves of the plant use the sun to create energy, but the delicate berries of the plants would be destroyed by the sun if it weren’t for the dark antioxidant pigments that are protective of its harmful rays.

**Why should we eat a variety of berries each week?**

* Berries such as blueberries, cranberries, strawberries and raspberries are rich in disease-fighting phytochemicals that prevent and even reverse serious diseases like cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stomach ulcers and even help lower cholesterol levels. The key is to be eating these berries in their raw, whole fruit form rather than trying to eat processed berries or drink fruit drinks made from berries. In order to get the healing [phytonutrients](http://www.naturalnews.com/phytonutrients.html), you must get the [berries](http://www.naturalnews.com/berries.html) in the freshest form possible -- that means no processed berries, just raw berries, right off the bush or straight from the grocery store.   
   What is so interesting about these berries is why are they such powerful [disease](http://www.naturalnews.com/disease.html) fighters. Berries contain a variety of [phytochemicals](http://www.naturalnews.com/phytochemicals.html) and antioxidants -- many of these are what give the plants their [color](http://www.naturalnews.com/color.html) but they also add a sense of flavor to the berries. These phytonutrients are extremely powerful compounds for supporting optimum human [health](http://www.naturalnews.com/health.html); in fact they are far more powerful than any pharmaceutical in terms of providing [healthy](http://www.naturalnews.com/healthy.html) benefits without dangerous [side effects](http://www.naturalnews.com/side_effects.html).
* **Compared to other** [**fruit**](http://www.naturalnews.com/fruit.html) **sources, berries offer the highest content of** [**antioxidants**](http://www.naturalnews.com/antioxidants.html) **and phytochemicals for fighting disease.** Berries are also rich in many [vitamins and minerals](http://www.naturalnews.com/vitamins_and_minerals.html), including **calcium, magnesium and zinc --** [minerals](http://www.naturalnews.com/minerals.html) that are frequently deficient in the diets of most Americans

**Healthy Serving Ideas**

* Add berries to your cereal for added fiber and flavor.
* Mash berries to make your own jam.
* Top pancakes with fresh blueberries or blackberries.
* Stir your favorite berries into low-fat yogurt for a tasty snack.
* Toss raspberries into a spinach salad.
* Keep a bag of mixed berries in the freezer for smoothies.

**What can be made from berries?**

* Jams and jellies
* Flavored waters and other drinks such as teas and coffees
* Syrups and sauces

**How Much Do I Need?**

* A½ cup of berries is about one cupped handful.
* A½ cup of most berries (blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries) is a good source of vitamin C and fiber.
* Berries are rich in phytochemicals, which come from plants and may help you stay healthy.

**6. How do you pick a good Blackberry or Raspberry?**

* Choose fresh **raspberries that are bright and evenly colored**. **Refrigerate for up to three days.**
* Select **fresh blackberries that are dry and shiny**, without any green or red colors. **Refrigerate for up to three days.**
* **Wash berries just before serving.**

**Just the Facts**

* The tayberry, loganberry, and boysenberry are hybrids of blackberries and raspberries.
* The boysenberry, a type of trailing blackberry, was cultivated in California by horticulturist Rudolph Boysen. Walter Knott began selling it at his roadside fruit stand in the mid-1930s.
* There are four colors of raspberries: gold, black, purple, and red.
* In 1867 there were 40 varieties of raspberries now more than 200 varieties are known.

Sources:

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