

- **Do I need to amend soil when I plant blueberries?**

Blueberry plants require acidic soil (pH 4.0 to 5.0) that is well-drained. While our area in BC tends to be acidic, it is worth your time testing the pH. Soil testing both for pH & nutrients is worthwhile. This can be done with a home kit although for reliability doing professional sampling is best. Locally Integrity Sales does soil testing for different areas. You can check at your local garden centre or online. How best to amend your soil will be dependent on your test results.

If you are prepared, 6-12 months in advance is ideal for testing allowing you time to amend the soil. Correcting the pH will allow the plants to take up the nutrients and bolster your plantings. It can make the difference of a plant growing or flourishing.

In addition, to thrive and produce, the soil needs to be loose, and high in organic matter to continuously feed the plant.

Amending the soil before planting then mulching throughout the year and finishing the season with a layer of mulch helps plants thrive.

Mulch is particularly helpful for all plants. In particular, with fruiting plants, adequate moisture is very important. Mulching helps keep the moisture in the soil. The bonus is that it keeps the weeds at bay. If the weed seeds can't see the sun they don't germinate. There are many scholarly articles to aid in blueberry plant care including common pest and disease prevention.

Sources:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriservice-bc/production-guides/berries/blueberries>

<https://extension.umn.edu/fruit/growing-blueberries-home-garden#:~:text=It%20is%20best%20to%20amend,or%20as%20soil%20sulfur%2Fsulphur.>

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/search?search=Blueberry+soil>