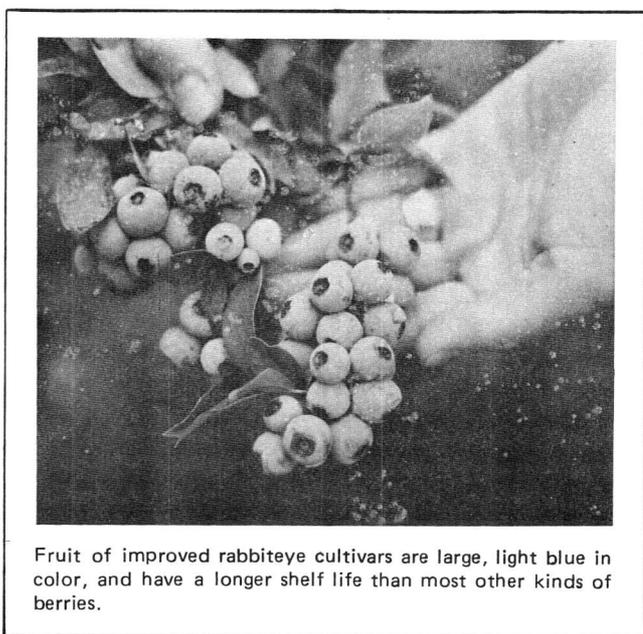


ailable cultivars differ somewhat in such berry characteristics as flavor, size, color, and seediness, these characteristics are not as important in the choice of cultivars for Florida as ripening time, suitability for mechanical harvesting, yield potential, ability to set crops after mild winters, and compatibility in cross-pollination. Which cultivars are best to plant will depend on plantation size and location and on harvest method and marketing strategy.

Rabbiteye blueberries require cross-pollination between different cultivars for acceptable yields. A minimum of two different cultivars that bloom together must be interplanted, and there are reasons for expecting even higher yields when three or more compatible cultivars are interplanted. Cultivars should be planted in alternating rows so that each row is bordered by a row containing a different cultivar. New cultivars are continually being developed and tested in Florida, and growers should check with the county agent for the latest recommendations.



Fruit of improved rabbiteye cultivars are large, light blue in color, and have a longer shelf life than most other kinds of berries.

Table 3 gives 1983 cultivar recommendations grouped according to area of adaptation and marketing strategy. For early shipping, Aliceblue, Beckyblue and Climax should be interplanted for good cross-pollination. For you-pick, Woodard, Bluebelle and Delite should be added. To get the best cross-pollination among these six cultivars, the three early cultivars (Aliceblue, Beckyblue, Climax) should be planted in three-row groupings (ABC, ABC, ABC, etc.) on one side of the field and

Woodard, Bluebelle, and Delite should be planted in three-row groupings (WBD, WBD, WBD) on the other side. In the panhandle and north of Lake City, where Tifblue is recommended, it should be added to the Woodard-Bluebelle-Delite group.

**Table 3. List of Recommended Blueberry Cultivars for Florida**

Cultivar name	Use Category					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Aliceblue	1	2		4		
Beckyblue	1	2		4		
Climax	1	2		4		
Woodard	1			4		
Bluebelle	1		3	4		
Delite	1		3			
Tifblue*	1*		3*			
Premier					5	
Powderblue					5	
Brightwell					5	
Sharpblue				4		6

- Use categories:** (1) You-pick farm Ocala northward  
 (2) Early shipping (May 25-June 15) Ocala northward  
 (3) Late shipping (June 15-July 5) Ocala northward  
 (4) For test, you-pick, Orlando to Ocala  
 (5) New. Not thoroughly tested in Florida. Try one test row from Ocala northward.  
 (6) Highbush. Plant on well-drained soils.  
 \* Tifblue should be planted only in the panhandle and north of Lake City

Fruit from Aliceblue, Beckyblue, and Climax can be picked from June 1 to June 15 at Gainesville in an average year. This fruit would be the earliest rabbiteye blueberries on the market. It ripens with the last half of the North Carolina highbush crop, but the volume of blueberries available at that season is still low and fresh markets should be good. Woodard was excluded from the list of shipping berries in Table 3 because its fruit is less firm than is desirable for shipping. It is, however, a reliable producer and is highly recommended for you-pick farms. The ripening season for Woodard averages about one week after Aliceblue, Beckyblue, and Climax. For any one cultivar, the harvest period typically extends over about 3 weeks. By using early and late cultivars, a grower could extend his harvest season to a period of about 6 weeks if this were desirable.

## Yields

Blueberry yield reports vary widely, depending on farm location, plant age, cultivars, level of management, and whether or not one averages the