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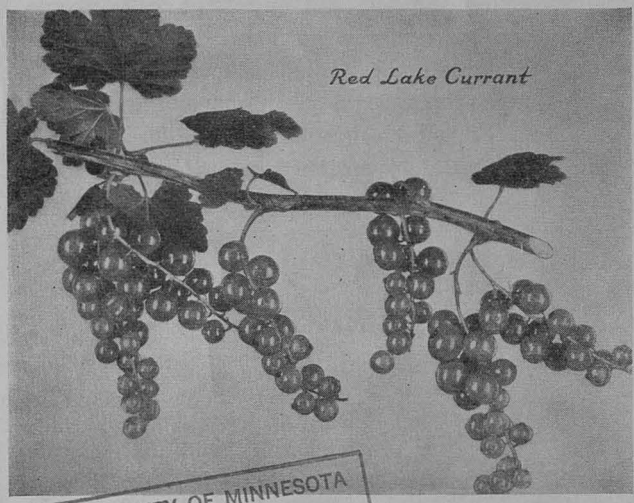
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*Growing*  
**CURRANTS**  
*and*  
**GOOSEBERRIES**  
*in Minnesota*



*Red Lake Currant*

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
 DOCUMENTS  
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## *Easy to Grow*

Compared to other fruits cultivated in Minnesota, currants and gooseberries are easily grown. They are hardy, productive on a variety of soils, and are seldom seriously injured by disease and insect pests.

The plants usually bear a considerable crop the third year after planting and if given reasonable care continue to bear indefinitely. The fruits are not adapted to a wide variety of uses but are particularly prized for special products. The superior qualities of currant jelly, currant and gooseberry jams, and gooseberry pie are traditional.

Extensive commercial plantings of currants and gooseberries have not been made in Minnesota. However, the limited quantities produced in existing commercial plantings usually find a profitable market. Three to six plants of each should adequately supply the ordinary family's needs.

### **PLANTING**

Currants and gooseberries will produce some fruit on almost any soil. Best yields will be obtained on fertile, heavy loam or clay loam containing enough organic matter to retain moisture well and cultivate easily.

If possible select a northeastern exposure where there will be protection from hot, dry winds. In the home garden the plants may be placed along the edge of the garden, next to a fence or building, provided they receive direct sunlight most of the day and are so situated that they can be cultivated.

Prepare the soil in the fall or early spring. Plant in the spring as soon as the soil can be put in workable condition. Space the plants four or five feet in the row. Rows should be six feet apart.

Two-year-old nursery plants grown from cuttings or layers are usually used. Set the plants firmly and an inch deeper than they were in the nursery. Remove all but four or five canes at the base. Cut the remaining canes back to one third their original height.

# SPRAY PROGRAM FOR CURRANTS AND GOOSEBERRIES

Prepared by the Divisions of Plant Pathology and Entomology

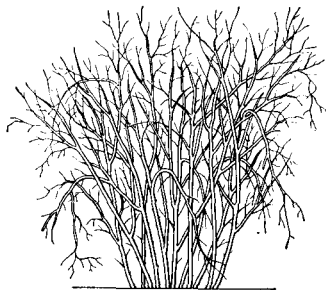
Time to spray	Materials to use	Pests controlled
1. Dormant spray—apply before buds burst	Liquid Lime Sulfur 1-8, or 1 pint to 1 gallon water	Aphid eggs and mildew
2. When terminal leaves are ½ to 1 inch long	Lead arsenate 3 lbs. to 100 gals. 1½ tablespoons per gal.	Leaf-feeding insects (Currant worm)
	Copper fungicide (according to manufacturer's recommendations for currants)	Mildew and leaf spot
	Nicotine sulfate 1 pint to 100 gals. 1 teaspoon per gal.	Aphids (Important if the first spray was omitted)

**NOTE:** Apply lead arsenate before the fruit develops to control currant worms; use rotenone or pyrethrum after fruit is formed. If leaf spot develops after the early sprays, apply a second copper spray soon after blooming. If mildew shows up, apply wettable sulfur, 5 pounds to 100 gallons (3 tablespoons to 1 gallon) as soon as it appears on terminal leaves. Canes infested with currant borer must be cut off at the ground level, removed and burned.

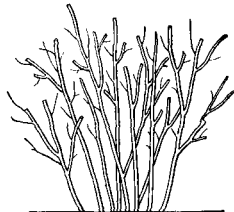
## PRUNING

Currants and gooseberries will bear some fruit with no pruning, but to maintain heavy yields of large berries they must be pruned annually after the fourth growing season. They may be pruned at any time during the dormant period, late fall or early spring being the most common. Neglected bushes can be rejuvenated by annual pruning and fertilizing.

In pruning a bush remove the four-year-old and older canes. The best fruit is borne on three-year-old and younger canes. Older canes continue to bear small amounts of inferior fruit but tend to clog the bush, retarding the development of desirable younger canes.



Bush before pruning



Bush after pruning

## CARE OF THE PLANTING

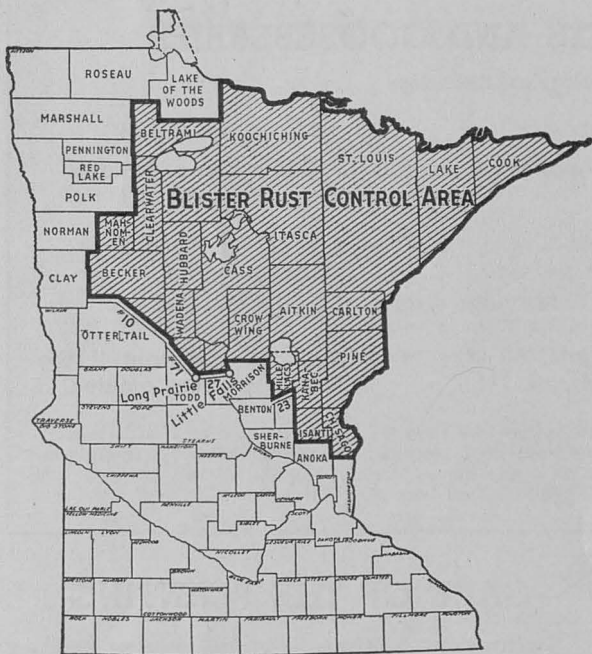
**Cultivation**—Cultivate immediately after planting and frequently enough thereafter to keep the soil loose and free from weeds and sod until mid-August. Avoid deep cultivation near the plants as the roots are usually near the surface at this point and are easily injured. Occasional hand weeding will be necessary to remove weeds growing close to the plants.

Mulching is not generally recommended. Although it is more effective than cultivation in conserving moisture during hot dry weather, its advantages are not great enough to justify the extra expense and work involved.

**Fertilizer**—The fertility of the soil greatly affects the vigor of the plants and the size and quality of fruits produced. The application to each plant of approximately a bushel of rotted barnyard manure or similar organic material each spring or late fall is desirable. Apply the fertilizer close to, but not directly on, the crowns of the plants.

Commercial fertilizers are useful but less satisfactory than manure. Those having the approximate formula 4-10-6 may be applied in a similar manner at the rate of a cupful per plant.

**Winter Protection**—The plants are hardy and need no protection from cold, but the canes are sometimes broken down with the settling of heavy snows. If this injury seems likely to occur, tie the canes in a compact upright bunch in the late fall. Cut the strings after the first cultivation in the spring.



Area in which planting permit is required for currants and gooseberries

## PLANTING RESTRICTIONS

In certain areas of Minnesota it is unlawful to plant currants and gooseberries without first obtaining a permit. This restriction is necessary because they are the alternate hosts for a serious disease attacking white pine, "white pine blister rust."

Before planting currants and gooseberries within the blister rust control area shown in the map, you, or your nurseryman, are required to secure a planting permit from the Department of Conservation, St. Paul. Before issuing the permit the department will want to know the legal description (Forty, Section, Township, and Range) of the land on which currants or gooseberries are to be planted in the country, or the street address at which they are to be planted in town. Your nurseryman must have your permit before shipping currants and gooseberries. Furnish him the permit when ordering or if you wish him to obtain the permit for you just tell him "I intend planting the above ordered currants and gooseberries on the \_\_\_\_\_ Forty, \_\_\_\_\_ Section, \_\_\_\_\_ Township, \_\_\_\_\_ Range," or "I intend planting above ordered currants and gooseberries at \_\_\_\_\_ Street, \_\_\_\_\_, Minnesota."

## CURRANT VARIETIES

**Red Lake**—Berries large, red. Long well-filled bunches. Attractive and productive.

**Cascade** (Minn. No. 70)—Similar to Red Lake. Plant upright and has more vigor. Berries slightly larger but clusters shorter.

**Viking**—Berries medium size, red. Plant upright, vigorous. Although the fruit type is not as desirable as the two above varieties, Viking is valuable as it is resistant to white pine blister rust. Although a planting permit is required, this variety is usually permitted in control areas even though other varieties may be prohibited.

**White Grape**—Berries medium size, mild. Fairly productive. The only white variety generally available.

**Black Currant**—The planting of black currants is prohibited in the rust control area. Minnesota nurserymen do not propagate this type.

**Yellow-Flowering Currant** (sometimes called Missouri Currant or Buffalo Currant)—Berries large, black. Fairly productive. Used mainly as an ornamental plant although strains such as the Crandall have been selected for fruiting purposes.

## GOOSEBERRY VARIETIES

**Carrie**—Medium size berries, red when ripe. Plant productive, somewhat resistant to mildew, nearly thornless.

**Como**—Medium to large yellow-green fruit. Bush medium size, productive, quite resistant to mildew. One of the best varieties for Minnesota.

**Pixwell**—Medium size fruit, light red color. Long stems make picking easier than most other varieties. Bush fairly vigorous and productive.

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