

Growing Blackberries in High Tunnels – Dr. Marvin Pritts, Cornell University

Blackberries are typically not grown in New York or much of the Northeast because cold winter temperatures injure floricanes and greatly reduce yield potential. In addition, exposure of blackberries to rain causes mold to form and results in a high percentage of unmarketable berries. Growing blackberries inside tunnels as opposed to the open field greatly reduces winter injury and damage from surface moisture. With the appropriate varieties, yields inside tunnels can approach 30,000 lbs/acre. However, blackberries in tunnels are extremely vigorous and techniques must be used to manage this vigor. High-strength trellises are required to support the heavy canes and high fruit load. Despite these challenges, blackberry production looks to be quite profitable and market demand continues to be strong. Information on blackberry and raspberry production in high tunnels can be found at:

<http://www.fruit.cornell.edu/berry/production/pdfs/hightunnelsrasp2011.pdf>