



Big Dipper Farm

26130 SE Green Valley Rd, Black Diamond, Washington 98010

www.BigDipperFarm.com

Wild and Wonderful Wisteria

Nothing else lends that elegant and magical 'Alice in Wonderland' quality to the garden. Long, dripping clusters of pea-like blossoms, fill the early Spring air with an incredible perfume. These fast growing vines need good placing and management. Here in Washington, they've been spotted blooming in the tops of 60 foot Douglas Firs! A long fence line or arbor are perfect but must be strong. They can girdle and kill trees and if grown on or near a structure, they must be pruned regularly. But for dramatic, large-scale impact, and longevity this plant is hard to beat.

Wisteria plants like full sun and a slightly acidic, rich, well-drained soil.

Some annual pruning will promote flowering. It will also keep it from eating your house. In Sierra Madre, California at the annual "Wistaria Festival" (That's how they spell it), visitors can view a vine that is 111 years old, weighs approximately 250 tons and bears over 1.5 million lavender blossoms. According to Guinness, this is the World's Largest Blossoming Plant. The original house that it was planted on completely collapsed and was rebuilt 200 feet away. So take that pruning advice seriously or better yet, grow it on it's own structure and a beefy one at that.

Why won't my Wisteria bloom? A common problem with new plantings. Here are the reasons and solutions:

- Start with plants from cuttings or grafts, not seed grown. (ours are all graft or cutting grown)
- Plant in full sunlight.
- Do Not prune heavily in winter and spring. This encourages vegetative growth not flowers.
- Do Not fertilize with nitrogen fertilizer for vegetative growth.
- Do give a heavy application of superphosphate (0-20-0) in early spring.
- Do your heavy pruning of new growth in late spring or early summer.
- Do try root pruning in late Fall. Use a spade to cut straight down in a four-foot circle around the trunk. Especially useful for restoring older vines.