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## Types of Blackberries

Basically, there are two types of blackberries – the erect type and the trailing type. The distinction between the two is their growth habit. Erect blackberries have arched, self-supporting canes. Trailing blackberries have canes that are not self-supporting and must be tied or trellised. The erect blackberry is recommended where the grower wishes to avoid trellising, and trailing blackberries are recommended only for home use.

*Blackberries*

Erect Types: Thorny Varieties:

**Brazos** is an erect blackberry released by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in 1959. It is early and has very large, fair quality fruit that is maintained over the entire fruiting season. The fruit is slightly sour and rather seedy. It is productive and well adapted to fresh market outlets. In Louisiana, it is very susceptible to rosette (double blossom disease) but resistant to anthracnose. The fruit is not extremely firm but holds its shape well when processed. Brazos has generally been replaced by the University of Arkansas varieties that are named after Indian tribes.

**Cheyenne** is a 1977 University of Arkansas release suitable for commercial or home use. Its fruit is sweet, large and has a slight raspberry flavor. It ripens mid-season and is adapted to the entire state.

**Brison** is a large, erect, high-yielding blackberry. A 1977 Texas A&M release, its fruit is firmer and sweeter than Brazos. It's best suited to south Louisiana. It ripens with Brazos (mid-May).

**Rosborough** is a high-yielding 1977 Texas A&M release. The fruit is firmer with smaller seeds than Brazos. Canes are quite vigorous and thorny. It is adapted to the entire state. Rosborough is very susceptible to rosette disease.

**Womack** produces medium-size fruit and high yields. It is a 1977 Texas A&M release that is adapted to the entire state. Its fruit has smaller seeds and is sweeter than Brazos. Womack and Rosborough have consistently had high yields at blackberry trials in Baton Rouge.

**Shawnee** is a consistent high yielder with medium-large fruit. This University of Arkansas 1983 release ripens about one week later than Cheyenne. A peak in production during the harvest season is not apparent. The soft berries do not store or ship well. Shawnee is highly susceptible to double blossom disease.

**Choctaw** is a 1989 release from the University of Arkansas that has erect canes and medium-size fruit. It is a very early variety with small seeds. The fruit is soft with handling and storage qualities similar to Shawnee. Choctaw has a chill hour requirement of 300-400 hours and is susceptible to late freezes. It is susceptible to rosette disease. Choctaw is recommended for trial for early blackberries.

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**Kiowa** is a 1996 release from the University of Arkansas with erect canes and very large fruit. The fruit is the largest of the Arkansas varieties; storage and handling qualities are good. Kiowa blooms just after Choctaw and Shawnee, although its chill hour requirements are probably near 200 hours. It is susceptible to rosette disease. Kiowa is recommended for commercial and home use throughout Louisiana.

**Chickasaw** is a 1998 release from the University of Arkansas with erect canes and a fruit ripening rate comparable to Shawnee. Storage and handling are better than Shawnee. Plants are high yielding. Chickasaw is susceptible to Rosette. It is recommended on a trial basis for commercial and home production.

It should be noted that most thornless varieties will not be as productive in the coastal area of Louisiana due to the necessary chilling hours required. You can secure additional information from the LSU AgCenter publication number 1553, Growing Blackberries for Pleasure and Profit by Dr. John Pyzner.

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