



*For the joy of gardening!*

**Estabrook's**

## WINTERBERRY HOLLY CARE

### **LIGHT**

Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) is a deciduous holly for sun to partial shade. Good sunlight generally improves the berry display. Allow room for the named cultivar: compact Red Sprite and Berry Poppins have different proportions from taller selections such as Winter Red.

### **WATER**

Water new plants deeply and keep roots from drying out. Established winterberry appreciates consistent moisture, particularly while fruit is developing. Dry conditions can reduce the berry display. Moist sites can suit this shrub, but do not leave a container standing in stagnant water.

### **SOIL & PLANTING**

Plant in acidic, moisture-retaining soil with the root flare at the surface. Mulch over the roots without burying the stems. Check the cultivar's mature width and leave space for access and airflow. High-pH soil can cause yellow foliage and poor performance.

### **FEEDING**

Use a soil test to guide feeding and any pH correction. Avoid applying lime without evidence that it is needed. Heavy fertilizer will not replace a missing male pollinizer. Check soil moisture and root condition before feeding a shrub with sparse growth or yellow leaves.

### **SEASONAL CARE**

Minimize pruning to preserve the flowering and fruiting display. If shaping is necessary, prune conservatively in late winter or early spring, recognizing that heavy cuts can reduce berries. Leave fruiting stems for winter interest or cut a few selectively. Normal autumn leaf drop exposes the berries.

### **HELPFUL TIPS**

Female plants require a male winterberry flowering at the same time. Jim Dandy is commonly paired with Red Sprite, and Southern Gentleman with Winter Red; confirm each label. Berry Poppins and Berry Heavy selections commonly use Mr. Poppins. Male plants do not bear berries. Keep fruit away from children and pets.