

*PICKING CURRANTS (BLACK and RED):*

- Kestrel Perch's main BLACK CURRANT variety (Ben Sarek) produces gorgeous big berries – but they have an unfortunate tendency to drop off the bush when fully ripe, especially in hot, dry weather. And once on the ground, those dark berries are really hard to spot. CSA currant picking is likely to be one-bush-per-share, so to get the most out of your bush, wrap one of the little drop cloths (provided) around the base of the bush and pick up any berries that get knocked off during picking.
- RED CURRANTS hold on the bush much better than black ones – for several weeks, in fact – so you can safely put off your red currant picking for a while if there's a lot of other picking available. Pick RED CURRANTS as *entire clusters* and wait to remove the stems until you're ready to use them. (Stripping them off the stems is a faster way to pick, but it tends to break the berries' skins and reduce their keeping quality, so it's not recommended unless you're really going to use your currants right away.)
- If you're planning on making natural jam or jelly without adding commercial pectin, BOTH TYPES OF CURRANTS are best picked just barely ripe, when their pectin content is highest. As they continue ripening, they lose pectin and acid and become "sweeter" (relatively speaking!) and better for use in desserts. Just remember that the BLACK CURRANTS will not stick around and wait for you!