

**“I feel as if I had opened a book and found roses of yesterday, sweet and fragrant, between its leaves.”-L.M. Montgomery, *Anne of the Island***



#### **AUGUST-IN OUR ROSE GARDEN:**

**“Don’t** be in a hurry to use new insecticides; wait until they get all the bugs out.” – HW

**Anything** that can be done to reduce stress will build a better bush and provide the basis for the best flowers of the year in October. Watering every day is advisable and water-washing 2 or 3 times a week around 7:00 pm (just as the sun is going down, but enough time to allow leaves to dry) can be used to supplement the water needs and provide mite protection. Whatever your schedule permits, the roses will respond to just about any extra water you can give them (remember to mulch them, see below).

**Flowers** will be small during this period, but with frequent small amounts of additional organics (fish meal, kelp, blood meal) and additional chemical fertilizers (cut normal amounts at least in half, but keep up the watering), the bushes should continue to maintain or even grow bigger and occasional basal breaks may appear. Mid to late August is the ideal time to apply the organics for the Fall bloom cycle. The work outside during these dog days can be hazardous, but it doesn't have to be done all in one day. Stretch it out, but most important take care of yourself !

**Late August** is also the time when bushes can be cleaned out. Small, twiggy growth and blind shoots should be removed to provide sunlight, airflow, and spray materials to penetrate throughout the bush. This cleaning out process can include some shaping of the bush, eliminating the weaker of two canes where they fork. The biggest flower in October will come from basal breaks or a single flower coming from one large cane. Remember, if it is not size that you want, and if you want as many flowers as possible, do less thinning or cleaning out of the bush.

**Mulching-** Keep the thickness at a 2 to 3 inch depth.

**Watering-** As the summer sun bares down, keep the top 6 to 8 inches of soil moist by watering early in the morning (5:30 to 8:00 AM allows more time to penetrate). Also, a good rose practice to follow at least once or twice a month is to water wash your bushes. It's best to do this in the early morning on the tops and bottoms of the foliage. Try to coordinate water washing with your spray program. The day before you spray, do your water washing routine. This water washing will help refresh your bushes and maintain active bush growth. Either use a pistol nozzle or some other water washing device you have rigged up. Also, remember that container grown roses need water more during the hot summer months.

**Feeding-** See 4th week of this month.

**Spraying-** Use Triforine (1 Tbsp.) per gal. of spray mixture. Spray both the tops and bottoms of your foliage on a weekly schedule. If the hot and dry conditions continue you can lengthen your spray interval to 7 - 10 days. (Mildew and blackspot spores should be completely dormant in this heat unless you are trying to grow roses in the shade. Please remember to make sure your rose beds are well watered before spraying and feeding.

**Summer Pests-** 1) Spider Mites- They are here, you better believe it. Check the bottom side of your rose foliage for a fine, white webbing while the top side and edges of the leaves will show a rusty coloration. If you have followed a good bush grooming program and kept them cleaned out from cluttered and spindly growth, it will make your job much easier in keeping your bushes spider mite clean. If you have mites, either spray with Greenlight mite spray (2 tsp. per gal. of spray) or water wash the bottom side of the foliage for 9 days at 3 day intervals. 2) Thrips- If you want to keep blooms clean, just mist the buds and flowers. Thrips will migrate from pastures, fields or other host plants in the area like honeysuckle, oleanders, magnolias, etc. Use Orthene at 2 tsp. (powder), or 2 Tbsp. (liquid) per gallon of mix. (Visit the San Antonio Rose Society's web site @ <http://www.sarosesociety.org>).

**\* Feeding Roses:**

**1)Organic Boost** - In late August give your roses a mix of equal parts of fish meal, cottonseed meal, and alfalfa meal. To this mixture add blood meal. Divide by 1/4 the total of the first three ingredients. For example, if you used 10 lbs. of the first three, then you would add 7 1/2 lbs. of blood meal to complete the mix. Give each bush at least two cups of this mix. For minis., give about 1/2 cup per plant. Water in. **2)Liquid Feed** - A feed such as 20-20-20 can be applied every two weeks through September into mid-October. Using a 32 gal. garbage can, mix two cups of 20-20-20, one cup fish emulsion and one cup of chelated iron (Sprint). Give each bush one gallon of this mix while miniatures need only about one quart. **3)Dry feed** - If you prefer to dry feed with a granular dry fertilizer of your choice, give each bush one cup. Miniatures should get only 1/2 cup per plant. (Be sure to see notes in "A Year in the Rose Garden

**“Failure is never fatal; success is never final – especially with roses.”** – HW Weather-wise, early May is a delightful time to work in the garden. There is much that can be done.

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**A) Watering-** Remember to keep the top 6" to 8" of your rose bed soils moist. Now is a good time to plan a weekly watering schedule for the upcoming summer season. Container roses will dry out quicker, so water them more often.

**B) Bush Grooming-** Make sure all blooms have been cut (deadheading eliminates a haven for thrips to reproduce) from the first cycle. Cut to a five leaflet when removing old blooms. Cut out any spindly, cluttered growth which is an ideal place for spider mites and fungus problems to start. Cutting out blind shoots (short stems that are not vigorously growing), check for dieback (stems turning black & moving downward) from a previous cuts and any old or dead wood. Try and open up the bush as much as possible to provide good air circulation and make it possible to get better coverage with your spray materials.

**C) Feeding- 1. Dry Feed-** Once a month use 10-20-10 or 12-24-12, a good general purpose fertilizer. It doesn't have to say "rose food" (That makes it 3 or 4 dollars higher). Give each bush one cup spread around the drip line. For mini's use 1/4 cup per plant. Water in after applying.

**2. Liquid or Soluble Feed-** Every two weeks mix two cups of 20-20-20 in a 32 gal. garbage can and pour one gallon around each bush. Mini's get one quart each. (\* Now's the time to launch a major thrust for more basal and low breaks with a readily available source of nitrogen followed by Epsom salts applied just after the initial bloom cycle while roses are at their peak of vigor. Epsom salts (magnesium sulfate) works best when "available" nitrogen is present (a nitrate form is best). Use a soluble 20-20-20 the first week, 1/2 cup of Epsom salts the second week, with successive applications of 20-20-20 weeks three and four. Cut the 20-20-20 concentration in half due to the frequency of application. New basals require "lots" of energy in the root zone for results, driven by "lots" of water. - HW)

**3. Slow Release Fertilizers-** Use Osmocote(Plus), or the new one called Sta-Green (which releases fertilizer based on soil temps., not moisture content). Make sure that if you use any slow release fertilizers, you use them according to directions.

**D) Spraying-** Maintain a regular 5-7 day spray interval to keep your garden free of blackspot, mildew or any other fungus problems.

1. Blackspot & Mildew- Use Triforine (1 Tbsp. per gal. of spray).
2. Thrips- To keep your blooms clean and pretty, mist the buds and flowers with Orthene or Cygon. Use either Orthene liquid (2 Tbsp.), Orthene powder (2 tsp) or Cygon (2 tsp) per gal. of mixture.
3. Spider mites- Use Green Light mite spray mix (2tsp) per gal. of spray mixture. Spray bottom sides of the foliage where the mites are. If you prefer to use plain old water, just wash the bottomside of the foliage every three days for nine days. Avid is a sure kill if you have a fresh supply used 3 times 3 to 4 days apart. Hexagon is great as it kills the eggs and is long lasting, and Floramite is a new miticide. It is highly recommended that two or three different approaches be used over the warm season to ward off mites developing a resistance to the chemicals.

**E) Mulching**- This is a very important key to having good late spring and summer rose growth on your roses. There are some good combinations to use for mulching such as: **1.** Lay down 2" of compost, and on top of that put 1" of chopped up leaves (Oak works well). **2.** Lay down 2" of aged horse manure, and on top of that put 1" of chopped up leaves. **3.** Lay down 2" of mushroom compost, and on top of that put 1" of grass clippings (St. Augustine preferred, not Bermuda). Mulch does a number of things for your roses including preserving surface moisture, protecting feeder roots from the heat, retards weeds and encourages the natural soil process.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO WATER THOROUGHLY BEFORE FEEDING OR SPRAYING! (Visit the San Antonio Rose Society's web site @ <http://www.sarosesociety.org>)**

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**-From "A YEAR IN THE ROSE GARDEN": by A.J. "Pop" Warner**

**Many good rosarians** apply organics such as fish meal, alfalfa meal, cotton seed meal, manure and blood meal to promote better fall bloom. If used, they need to be applied very early this month to give them time to break down and become available to the roses. If applied too late we do not get the full benefit from them before the fall shows (and some will say an extra spurt of growth in November will make the roses more vulnerable to freeze damage.)

**Blackspot control** becomes more critical as the year passes mid-summer. A badly infected bush in August has less time to repair itself with good hard canes before winter. Most beds that have had regular weekly spraying with Funginex (Triforine) are free of blackspot, but even those that have been neglected or sprayed improperly and have become infected can be cured by good care the rest of the year. Adding 1/2 Tablespoon Dithane M-45 or Manzate per gallon to the Funginex mixture and spraying religiously once a week will almost guarantee wiping out the infection in 3 to 5 weeks. Dithane M-45, used alone at one Tablespoon per gallon also is very effective, but somewhat less so than the mixed fungicides.

**Adequate water** becomes more important at this time. In (Big if here in S.A.!) spite of the monsoon rains we have had the first half of the year the beds can dry out in a hurry, resulting in wilting and stunting of new growth. We still have time for a drought. One week without rain in August becomes a drought!

It takes longer to water beds properly that have heavy soil than those with loose sandy soil. On the other hand, the loose beds dry out quicker, so we have to use a little judgment as to how often and how long to water. A good way to check is to probe the bed with a sharp stick and note the resistance.

**Most good rosarians** will continue monthly or bi-monthly fertilization with their favorite materials, but they should not over-do it. More roses do poorly in summer from over fertilization than too little. Beds rich in humus can tolerate (and benefit from) more inorganic fertilizers than those lacking this life-giving substance.

**Check the mulch** and, if it has become packed, stir it for better aeration to the soil and for better insulation. Add to it if it has become thin. An organic mulch added at any time of the year is never wasted.

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**ORGANIC ROSE PROGRAM - HG (see Feb2do List for complete program)**

**Watering:** If possible, save and use rainwater. If not, add 1 tbsp. of natural apple cider vinegar per gallon of water. If all else fails, just use tap water but don't over water. Avoid salty well water.

**For best results foliar feed** with Garrett Juice every 2 weeks, but as least once a month. When soil is healthy, nothing but Garrett Juice is needed in the spray. During our hot Texas months, try watering and spraying in the morning.

**Pest Control Program:** Add the following to Garrett Juice and spray as needed.

Garlic teas - 1/4 cup/gal. or label directions for minor insect or disease infestations.

Citrus oil, orange oil, or d-limonene - 1 oz./gall. of water as a spray, 2 oz./gal. of water as a drench.

Potassium bicarbonate - 1 rounded tbsp./gal. for minor diseases.

Liquid biostimulants - Use per label - Agrispon, AgriGro, Medina, Bio-Innoculant or similar product.

Neem - Use per label directions (should not be used when temps. are 85-90 or above) for more serious insect and disease infestations.

Fish emulsion - 2 oz./gal. for additional nutrients (may not be needed when using compost tea).

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\* In updating our collection of useful tips, we have come across several comments, instructions and chemicals that are being replaced with newer techniques and materials. The tips have been updated accordingly.

Please note, most of the information shared on our monthly tip pages was obtained from Research-based sources (see contributors acknowledgements below), and from individuals who are considered very knowledgeable on a particular subject.

Many thanks to our contributors for sharing their wisdom so we can all learn and share with one another.

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HW – Howard Walters, the Rambling Rosarian

AJW – A.J. “Pop” Warner, from his book “A Year In The Rose Garden”

NS – Neil Sperry, Texas horticulturalist, Publisher “Neil Sperry’s GARDENS”, visit his web site @ [www.neilsperry.com](http://www.neilsperry.com)

HG – John Howard Garrett, aka the “Dirt Doctor”.

THMag – Texas Highway Magazine

JG & TG – Joe Graedon and Teresa Graedon, Ph.D.; The People’s Pharmacy, courtesy S.A. Express-News

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