

**“I’d rather have roses on my table than diamonds on my neck”-
Emma Goldman**



FEBRUARY - IN OUR ROSE GARDEN:

A. Organic Feeding- (see also Organic Rose Program below) this is an excellent rose practice that we encourage all rose growers to incorporate into their total rose care program for the year. The following organic mixture of 10 lbs. alfalfa meal, 10 lbs. cottonseed meal, 10 lbs. fishmeal, and 7 1/2 lbs. blood meal, or the use of "Rose-Glo" (from Maesto-Gro), will make your total rose feeding program work so much better. Give each bush 1 or 2 cups spread around the drip line of the bush. You may lightly scratch it into the soil, or just let it work itself into the soil as you carry out your watering program. An important fact to remember about organics is that they help renew our soils by building up the beneficial microorganisms in the soil. This in turn makes the whole feeding program get up and go.

B. Watering- As you plant new roses or transplant old ones, make sure you water plants adequately. If our weather around here continues to be generous to our gardens with timely rains, our roses will really get up and grow this coming spring. Freshly planted roses, whether in the ground or container, should be kept moist, not soggy.

C. Planting Bareroot and Potted Roses- (Refer to "How To Grow Roses" booklet, pgs. 5-7)

D. Pruning- Spring pruning is much different than our fall bush grooming. It is now that we prune to re-invigorate our rose bushes by cutting out old wood and shaping the bush for the future building of our plants. Generally in this part of South Texas, spring pruning in the rose garden usually commences mid-February on. We usually wait and start the third weekend of the month (Refer to S.A. Rose Society's "How To Grow Roses", pgs. 9-13).

E. Clean Up Spray- When pruning is completed, remove any old foliage left on the bush and give your bushes and rose bed a good clean up spray using 1 Tbsp. of Ortho Disease Control (Triforene) along with Dithane or Manzate at 2 tsp. per gal. This is also a good time to come in with a general spray of Malathion (insecticide), at 2 tsp. per gal. You may combine your fungicide and insecticide materials for this general clean up spray. *When using Malathion, add 1 Tbsp. of white vinegar per gal. of spray to make it more effective.

F. General Feeding Program- then choose your rose "dessert" from the following: **Either: A.** - A soluble feeding using 20-20-20. Mix 2 cups in a 32 gal. garbage can and give each bush 1 gal. poured around the drip line. Give mini's 1 qt. Do this every 2 weeks. **Or: B.** - A balanced all-purpose dry (granular) feed such as 19-5-9. Use 1-cup spread around the dripline of the bush, just under the mulch (remember we want to feed the soil, the soil feeds the bush). Give mini's 1/3 cup. Do this monthly. *It doesn't have to say, "ROSE FOOD" on the bag to feed roses!

Remember to provide adequate amounts of water to get full use of fertilizers applied. Along with the important manures, compost, etc. that you applied earlier in the winter, WATER makes these materials and fertilizers available to your plants. Be wise in water usage!

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

Complete bare-root planting this month.

Complete transplanting by mid-month. Although it can be done much later, it also is much more difficult. You can now prune as you plant.

Do not spray for insects until insects appear. Aphids may soon appear on new growth but they are easily controlled with almost any good insecticide, sprayed just on the new growth. They may even be washed off.

ORGANIC ROSE PROGRAM - by HG

Roses should only be grown organically since they are one of the best medicinal and culinary herbs in the world. When they are loaded with toxic pesticides and other chemicals, that use is gone, or at least should be. Drinking rose hip tea or using rose petals in teas or salads after spraying with synthetic poisons is a really bad idea. For best results with roses, here's the program:

Selection: Buy and plant adapted roses such as antiques, David Austin's and well-proven hybrids (see "How To Grow Roses by San Antonio Rose Society", under Selecting Roses For Our Area). The old roses will have the largest and most vitamin C filled hips. R. roses have the most vitamin C.

Planting: Prepare beds (1,000 sq.ft.) by mixing the following into existing soil to form a raised bed: 6" compost, 1/2 to 1" lava sand; 20 lbs. of alfalfa meal, 20 lbs. cottonseed meal, 100 lbs. of Wheat bran/Cornmeal Soil Amendment, 20 lbs. of sul-po-mag. Soak the bare roots or rootball in water with 1 tbsp. of seaweed per gallon. Settle soil around plants with water - no tamping.

Mulching: After planting, cover all the soil in the beds with 1" of compost or earthworm castings followed by 2 - 3" of shredded native cedar. Do not pile the mulch up on the stems of the roses.

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

ORGANIC FERTILIZING PROGRAM:

Round #1 - Feb. 1-15 - organic fertilizer @ 20 lbs./1,000 sq.ft. (i.e. Garden-Ville, GreenSense, Maestro-Gro, Bioform Dry, Sustane or natural meals), lava sand @ 80 lbs./1,000 sq.ft., and horticultural cornmeal @ 10 lbs./1000 sq.ft.

Round #2 - June 1-15 - organic fertilizer @ 20 lbs./1,000 sq.ft., Texas greensand @ 40 lbs./1,000 sq.ft. or soft rock phosphate @ 30 lbs./1,000 sq.ft. if in acid soil areas.

Round #3 - Sept. 15-30 - organic fertilizer @ 20lbs./1,000 sq.ft., sul-po-mag @ 20 lbs./1,000 sq.ft. In sandy acid soils use soft rock phosphate instead @ 30 lbs./1,000 sq.ft.

* **Foliar Feed** with Garrett Juice twice monthly.

PEST CONTROL PROGRAM:

Add the following to Garrett Juice and spray as needed.

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

Citrus oil, orange oil, or d-limonene - 1 oz/gal. 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 for more serious insect and disease infestations.

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

SPRAY SCHEDULE: 1st spraying at pink bud in the spring. 1st two sprayings should include Garrett Juice and garlic tea. Additional sprayings as necessary. For best results spray every two weeks, but at least once a month. When soil is healthy, nothing but Garrett Juice is needed.

Parsley increases roses' fragrance, so plant some around your favorite bushes to enhance their sweet smell of success. – JB

Rose Care 101: Fungal Diseases (Neil Sperry's Gardens, Feb. 2002) – In the late 1980's, Dr. R. Kenneth Horst of Cornell University discovered that a simple, homemade spray controlled powdery mildew and black spot on roses as well as or better than any of the chemical fungicides. This spray, now known as the Cornell University formula, consists of two tablespoons of ultra-light horticultural oil and one heaping tablespoon of baking soda thoroughly stirred into one gallon of (warm) water. (If the label on the oil container doesn't mention an emulsifier, then add one tablespoon of a mild dishwashing soap.)

Give your roses (or other plants) a good watering 12 to 24 hours before using this or any spray. Then, with a pump-up sprayer and in the late evening after the roses are in the shade, spray to wet both sides of all the foliage. Begin your spray regimen immediately after you prune your roses in the late winter, and then continue on an as-needed basis thereafter. But never spray more often than once every two weeks and not at all when daytime temperatures rise above 95 F. * This formula will coat and smother common insects, such as aphids, cucumber beetles, thrips and scales, along with their little cousins, the two-spotted or red spider mites. (Word of caution, this formula will affect ladybugs, green lacewings and their larvae, so it might be a good idea to thrash or shake loose the good guys before you spray.) – FR

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

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PMCA – Purple Martin Conservation Association; visit their website at www.purplemartin.org.

CF – Calvin Finch, Bexar Co. extension agent for horticulture, Texas Agricultural Extension Service (courtesy S.A. Express-News)

EO – Edna Ortiz, Bexar Co. extension agent for horticulture, Texas Agricultural Extension Service (courtesy S.A. Express-News)

LR – Lynn Rawe, Bexar Co. extension agent for horticulture, Texas Cooperative Extension Service (courtesy S.A. Express-News); visit their web site at www.bexar-tx.tamu.edu.

SB – Steve Brown, Meteorologist, KSAT; visit their web site at www.ksat.com/weather.

WBC – courtesy, Wild Bird Center

HG – John Howard Garrett, aka. The Dirt Doctor; visit his web site at www.dirtdoctor.com.

TAE – Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Bexar County (courtesy S.A. Express-News)

NS – Neil Sperry, Texas horticulturalist, Publisher “Neil Sperry’s GARDENS” and contributor to S.A. Express-News; visit his web site at www.neilsperry.com.

FR – Field Roebuck, freelance garden writer and rosarian from Dallas

JB – Jerry Baker, America’s Master Gardener, aka “The Yardener”

EB - Ed Bradley, Consulting Rosarian, Master Gardener, San Antonio Rose Society Member

Compiled by MG Brian D. Townsend