

“A single rose can be my garden...a single friend, my world.”-Leo Buscaglia



OCTOBER-IN OUR ROSE GARDEN:

Some rain and cooler temperatures will help jump-start our roses for some beautiful fall color. To insure this, let's see what's on our agenda for this month.

A. Watering: Lots of tender rose growth means we need to provide ample moisture for our bushes to keep them growing. October can still be warm, even hot at times. So make sure the top 6-8 inches of soil stays moist (not soggy) to keep the tender growth from sun burning. * Make sure before any type of feeding or spraying that your bushes have been adequately watered (use your finger as your moisture meter).

B. Spraying: 1.) Blackspot and powdery mildew - Maintain a 5 - 7 day spray interval to keep your rose garden free of fungus problems like blackspot. These moist conditions where the foliage stays wet for several hours and warm temperatures are ideal conditions for the germination and spread of blackspot. As the nights cool into the high 50's and low 60's, mildew will also become a problem on all the fresh, tender growth. To prevent this, use Triforine (it is a good idea to alternate fungicides to prevent chemical resistance; organics are a good alternative with the cooler weather.) at a rate of one Tbsp. per gal. of spray, and if blackspot is showing up you can add two tsps. Mancozeb. When spraying, make sure coverage is on both sides of the foliage. *Banner Max* or *Compass* are good, but follow directions. **2) Insect Control - a) Thrips** - Thrips will damage the buds by rasping on them even before the sepals are down. This will discolor the flowers, and in some cases it will even cause the buds to not open. To prevent this, mist buds and flowers with systemic insecticide (old Orthene) * Don't spray the whole bush; just mist the buds and flowers on three day intervals. **b) Cucumber Beetles** - Cucumber beetles makes its appearance as the night temperatures cool. They are looking for a nice place to snuggle up and keep, so they will crawl into partially open buds and flowers, and while they are there they eat ragged holes in the petals. To prevent this, mist the buds and flowers with either

Orthene powder (2 tsp.) or Orthene liquid (2 tsp) per gal. Again, don't spray the whole bush; just mist the buds and flowers on 3-day intervals.

C. Feeding: This is an ideal time to maintain a soluble feeding program. (Keep in mind, whether you are a hard-core exhibitor or not, fertilization containing any kind of nitrogen should stop by mid October.) Suggestions for this might include the following: **1) Regular Feed Every Two Weeks** - Mix two cups of your favorite soluble feed (like 20-10-10) into a clean 32 gal. container (like a trash can). Into this solution add 1 cup of fish emulsion and 1 cup of a chelated iron like *Sprint 330*. Give miniature plants 1 qt. each and your larger bushes 1 gal. each. **2) Show Feed** - If you are a rose show fanatic, trophy or hardware hunter, do the following two weeks before the show. Mix 2 cups of *Superbloom* (12-55-6) along with 1 cup of fish emulsion/seaweed, two cups agricultural molasses, one cup *Sprint 330*. Mix this in a 32 gal. container. Feed each bush and miniature as previously recommended. *Remember *Water – Water – Water* !

D. Bush Grooming: You've finished your fall pruning, but we need to keep our bushes clean of small, twiggy growth. As your old blooms fade out, cut them off. * Old blooms left on the bush are ideal homes for thrips, cucumber beetles, etc. This will help you keep the thrips population curtailed.

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

No more fertilizer is needed after Oct. 15. While the writer has demonstrated to his satisfaction that year-round feeding is beneficial, the benefits are not really cost-effective.

Organic mulches added to beds during any month give long-term benefits to the roses. If the old mulch cakes as sometimes happens with fine-particle materials, stirring with a fork will restore its effectiveness.

Watch for mildew (both downy & powdery) and take steps to stop it quickly. Continue weekly spraying with fungicide on into November. Exhibitors with no visible problems with blackspot will withhold *Maneb* until after the shows. Others may want to reinforce *Triforene* (*Funginex*) with *Dithane M-45*, using 1/2 to 3/4 Tbs. per gal.

Mist buds only with an insecticide to control thrips. Misting once a week normally will be enough for most uses, but exhibitors will want to mist them every other day (some treat them once a day). No one insecticide is entirely effective but powdered *Orthene* used at two teaspoons per gallon (1/4 tsp. per qt.) does a good job. Many exhibitors alternate between *Mavrik*, *Orthene*, and *Cygon 2E* and even *Malathion*. Mist all buds; by the time they show color it may be too late. As Indian Summer approaches so usually does dry weather. Water as often as necessary to keep the beds moist. Exhibitors will give extra water. If one wants nice cutting blooms, disbudding is important. For exhibitors regular disbudding is a must.

Finish the new bed and order the new roses.

Take at least one rose to the show. But don't do like this writer sometimes does and try to exhibit the whole garden.

ORGANIC ROSE PROGRAM - HG

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 at least once a month. When soil is healthy, nothing but Garrett Juice is needed in the spray. This is the last month we should be providing any supplemental nutrients. Watering and spray program for pest/disease should continue until first freeze when our plants will go dormant and then as needed.

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 for more serious insect and disease infestations.

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

* 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.

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)

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

THMag – Texas Highways Magazine

HG – Howard Garret, aka the “Dirt Doctor” (www.dirtdoctor.com)

CR – Charlene Rowell, native plant horticulturist (article from Neil Sperry’s Gardens mag. Oct. 2001)

DG&DG – Dale Groom & Dan Gill, from Month-by-Month Gardening in Texas

JMP – Dr. Jerry M. Parsons, Professor & Extension Horticulturist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, visit his website at www.plantanswers.com.

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

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