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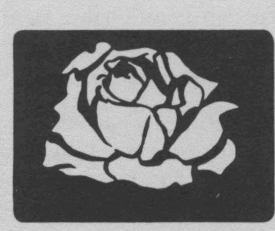
FACT SHEET

L-878

ROSES: SUMMER CARE



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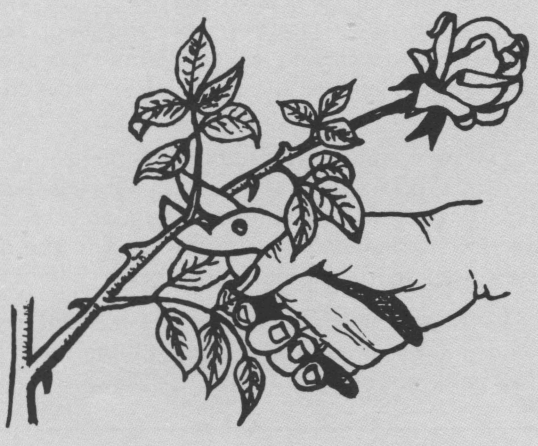

Make cut just above second five-leaflet leaf, above main stem or branch.

With the arrival of warm summer temperatures, interest in rose gardening often wanes because the flowers are small, of poor quality and the colors are faded. Proper care at this time will insure attractive foliage and an abundance of flowers throughout the fall and early winter. Strong healthy plants also are better able to withstand rugged winter conditions than those weakened by poor cultural practices and neglect.

Fertilizing

Roses are heavy users of nutrients and require regular applications of fertilizer for optimum growth. With new growth in the spring, apply fertilizer at the rate of 1¼ pounds of 8-8-8 or similar formulation per 100 square feet or as recommended by your county agricultural agent for lawns and gardens in your area. The soil should be moist before applying fertilizer. Spread the fertilizer over the surface of the bed at the prescribed rate and work it into the surface of the mulch with light cultivation. Water the bed thoroughly after applying fertilizer. Repeat the fertilizer applications every 6 to 8 weeks.

In the Panhandle area make the last application no later than July 20; in Central Texas, August 10; and in South Texas, August 20. Late applications of fertilizer may stimulate new growth and delay dormancy, making the plants more susceptible to winter injury.

In areas of the state where the soil is alkaline, chlorosis may be a severe problem. Request a copy of L-435, *Iron Chlorosis* from your county Extension office for information on correcting this problem.

Watering

For optimum growth and flower production, avoid moisture deficiency or over watering. Frequency of watering depends upon the soil type, climatic conditions, the growth stage and development. During periods of drouth and high temperature, watering may be needed every 3 to 4 days in a sandy soil. Roses may be irrigated by flood or sprinkler irrigation. If the sprinkler system is used, schedule watering early in the morning to allow the foliage to dry before exposure to the hot sun. This method also requires more frequent applications of fungicide to protect against blackspot and mildew diseases.

The most efficient use of irrigation water is obtained with the soaker hose, thoroughly wetting the soil to a depth of 8 to 10 inches at each application. This method does not wet the foliage, thus reducing spread of disease. Frequent, light

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applications of water will result in shallow root system and greater susceptibility to drouth damage.

Mulching

Using a 2-inch layer of mulching material, such as pine straw, cotton burrs, shredded bark, sugar cane pulp, granulated peat moss or other loose organic material, is an excellent cultural practice. It conserves moisture, keeps soil insulated against heat and reduces weed growth.

Some organic mulches decompose more rapidly than others, causing a temporary nitrogen deficiency in the soil which may cause a yellowing of the leaves. An application of 1 pound of ammonium sulphate per 100 square feet of bed area can correct this condition. Apply it to moist soil only and water thoroughly. The mulch should be renewed periodically since it decomposes and settles into the bed area.

Disease and Insect Control

The two major rose diseases, blackspot and mildew, should be prevented rather than attempting to control them after they occur. Begin the spray schedule as soon as new growth commences in the spring and repeat applications at intervals of 7 to 10 days throughout the growing season.

Rose Grooming

As the flowers fade and petals fall, remove the spent flowers. Otherwise, food and energy will be expended on useless seed production rather than new growth and continued flower production. Use sharp shears for removing the old flowers, making the cut just above the second five-leaflet leaf above the main cane or branch. See figure 1. Follow this same rule when cutting flowers for use in arrangements. Cuts made higher on the cane usually result in blind shoots or deformed flowers.

Strong basal shoots arising from the bud union or a point slightly above it should be retained, as these will form the foundation for the following season's growth. Allow the basal shoot to mature and bloom. After flowering, cut back the central leader as well as the side branches to a well-developed lateral bud or to just above a strong five-leaflet leaf as described above.

If long-stemmed exhibition blooms are desired, all lateral shoots developing below the terminal flower bud should be pinched out as soon as they are long enough to grasp firmly with the thumb and forefinger. Failure to remove the shoots results in smaller flowers and a candelabra-type growth. If removal is delayed, the stem will be crooked and not suitable for exhibition.

Follow recommended cultural practices as outlined in this fact sheet to produce vigorous, healthy plants. They will produce an abundance of attractive flowers that may be cut and used in the house or enjoyed in the home landscape.

Refer to the chart below for material recommended for the control of some of the more common pests of roses.

Diseases	Use spray formulation containing one of the following for control. Follow instructions on container	Remarks
Blackspot	Maneb folpet (Phaltan) Benlate (Benomyl)	Apply every 7 to 10 days when new growth starts in spring and continues through growing season.
Mildew	Karathane folpet (Phaltan) Wettable Sulfur Acti-dione	At first sign of disease apply at weekly intervals.
Insects		
Aphids	Diazinon Dimethoate Malathion Meta-Systox-R	Use as needed
Spider mites	Diazinon Kelthane Dimethoate Malathion Meta-Systox-R	Usually a second application 7 days later is needed for control. Mites can become resistant so materials should be changed each time.
Thrips	Carbaryl (Sevin) Dimethoate (Cygon) Meta-Systox-R	Difficult to control since they are common to all flowering plants.

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