

Rosemania

Rosemania Recommends:

By: **Robbie Tucker**

Welcome to our fifth year of writing the Rosemania Recommends column. Thank you for continuing to read our thoughts on rose growing and for supporting



our company. Since the readership is very diverse, I always like to start the year by reminding everyone of a rose's basic requirements.

1. Roses require a minimum of five hours of direct sunlight per day. More is better, but if you have at least five hours of direct sunlight, you have passed the first challenge. If you have a rose bush that is not getting enough sun, the spring is an excellent time to transplant it in a better location.
2. Roses need a balanced soil with good drainage.
3. Roses need plenty of water and nutrients.
4. Almost all roses require a preventative spray program for common fungus issues like blackspot, powdery mildew, rust, and downy mildew.

If possible, a raised bed is highly recommended for roses. There are a number of building materials that are cost effective and attractive. The rationale for a raised bed goes back to the basics listed above. While roses require a good deal of water, their roots won't tolerate standing water. It is very important that your planting area have good drainage. A raised bed will virtually guarantee this while allowing easy control of the soil you use. If it is not possible to have a raised bed, then give the proposed planting area the following test: Dig a hole approximately 18" wide by 18" deep. Fill the hole with water from your

garden hose. If the water has all drained from the hole in 30 minutes, you have sufficient drainage to plant roses.

The soil you use should be balanced. A good rule-of-thumb has always been to use 1/3 sand, 1/3 topsoil and 1/3 organic matter like humus or peat moss. This should be well mixed. For bigger projects, a tiller is recommended. For small projects a wheel barrow and a shovel work fine. Some nurseries offer a "rose mix" and this can make the job easier.

Be sure to test the pH of your soil. You can do this by either sending a soil sample to the Agriculture Extension Service in your area, or by purchasing a good pH meter. Since I check my pH several times



Kelway HB2	\$115.00
Generic (like HB2)	\$84.95
Soil pHD	\$61.00

a year, owning my own pH meter is very practical. The **Kelway pHD** and **HB2** are both excellent meters and will give you many years of service. (We are happy to report that we now carry a generic version of the highly regarded HB-2 for a much lower price.) Roses like to grow in slightly acidic soil. I target a pH of 6.0 to 6.5 for my rose beds. Now is the time to get your soil moving in the right direction to ensure a good rose growing season.

If you have beds that are more than three years old, you will begin to see a decline in the vigor of your rose bushes. This is normal since roses are heavy feeders and the high amounts of fertilizer you have used over the years have naturally caused salt build-up in your soil. This can be easily corrected by the addition of **Clearex**



**Clearex Salt
Leaching Solution**

**\$19.99 - quart
\$37.99 - gallon**

Salt Leaching Solution. I recommend watering each plant with a gallon of water containing 1 tablespoon of **Clearex**. This will neutralize the salts and allow your roses to start thriving again. In my garden, I apply Clearex twice a year...spring and late fall. We introduced Clearex four years ago and the feedback from has been dramatic. Bottom line: This product really works.

There are a few important things to remember when planting new roses. You will want your roses to first establish a good root system, BEFORE you concentrate on blooms. When you give a rose bush nitrogen, you tell it to grow canes and leaves. Having more canes and leaves than the root system can support is not a good idea for obvious reasons. Therefore, DO NOT fertilize your newly planted rose bush until it has produced one complete bloom cycle. Instead, use a good plant starter like **Liquid Karma**. You will notice a substantial difference in plants that are treated with Liquid Karma. It is also great to add to your liquid feeding program for established plants.

Liquid Karma

**Quart - \$25.00
Gallon-\$69.00**



The only exception to the "no fertilizer" rule at planting time is the use of organic fertilizers. The reason they don't apply to the rule is because they will take several months to break down and be usable to the plant. In the meantime, however, earth worms will find the organics, giving you the double benefit of worm castings and

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aeration prior to becoming food for your plants. Adding **Mills Magic Mix** to the surface of the soil and lightly scratching it into the top two inches is highly recommended. Use two cups for hybrid teas and other large roses and one cup for miniature roses.

Mills Products

New BloomKote Time-Released Fertilizer

BloomKote 15 lb. resealable bag	\$39.99
BloomKote 40 lb. plastic pail	\$89.00
Magic Mix (9 lb.)	\$14.99
Magic Mix (20 lb.)	\$25.99
Mills EasyFeed (9lb)	\$39.99
Liquid EasyFeed (1/2 gallon)	\$23.99
Liquid EasyFeed (1 gallon)	\$39.99
Liquid EasyFeed (5 gallon)	\$174.99

Another product you should definitely add when you plant is the natural fungus, **mycorrhizae**. This fungus will work with your root system to establish a lifetime bond allowing your roses' roots to dramatically expand. Since mycorrhizae is actually a living organism, you won't have to re-apply for many years.

Mycorrhizae

1 lb. Granular - \$15.00

New plantings. Treats 35 - 40 bushes

Drench Formula - \$49.95

Existing plants. Treats 150 bushes

Regardless of claims made by rose companies of "disease resistance", most roses require a spray program to prevent disease such as blackspot, powdery mildew and rust. The key word to remember is "prevent". Once your roses become infected, left untreated you can generally count on losing most of the leaves. No leaves means no photosynthesis and that equates to NO ROSES! While you can spray to eliminate such problems, the best strategy is to prevent them from happening in the first place.

First, a little lesson in terminology. The term "pesticide" includes fungicide, insecticide, miticide and herbicide. I tell you this because some people confuse the word "pesticide" with "insecticide". I don't like to spray pesticides any more often than necessary and I want to use the least toxic materials that will actually work. This is why I have chosen products

that only need to be sprayed every two weeks. For gardens of 50 roses or less, a practical program would be **Banner Maxx** sprayed every 14 days. I also mix **Mancozeb** or **Pentathlon DF** with the **Banner Maxx** (both at full strength) every other time I spray. **Banner Maxx** is very economical when you take into consideration that one teaspoon will make three gallons of spray solution. This means a one pint bottle will make almost 300 gallons. That is less than 25 cents per gallon and the shelf life of a bottle of Banner Maxx is up to 5 years from the time it is first

Fungicides

Eagle 20EW (pint)	\$69.99
Banner Maxx (pint)	\$69.99
Honor Guard (pint; generic B. Maxx)	\$59.99
E-RASE (pint) for Powdery Mildew	\$24.50
Compass (8oz)	\$219.00
Compass (2oz)	\$69.99
Mancozeb (pint)	\$24.99
Pentathlon DF (6 lb)	\$37.50
Pentathlon LF (2.5 Gallons)	\$84.95
Daconil Ultrex (5 lb)	\$85.00
Clearys 3336F (quart)	\$69.99
Aliette WDG (5 lb)	\$145.00
Aliette WDG (4oz NEW!)	\$29.00
Stature DM (for Downey Mildew)	\$159.99
CuPro (Kocide) 3lb.	\$29.99
Indicate 5 spreader sticker (qt)	\$19.95
Indicate 5 spreader sticker (gal)	\$41.95

opened if stored properly. We now have Banner Maxx in a generic formulation at a reduced price. Be sure to ask for it when you call or read about it on our website.

Choose a spray day that generally is good for you. For me, that is usually Friday. If it rains on Friday, I spray on Saturday but keep my regular day (Friday) in two weeks when it is time to spray again. If it rains after you have sprayed, the plants are protected IF the spray had dried before the rain.

For those who want the best preventative spray program available, consider alternating **Compass** with Banner Maxx every 14 days to prevent the fungus spores from building up a resistance to the use of only one systemic fungicide. Now that Compass is available in a 2 ounce size, it is very practical for any size garden and highly recommended.

I can highly recommend **Orthene** and **Merit** for control of most chewing and sucking insects. For thrips, you can't beat **Conserve**.

Insecticides

Conserve SC (Great for thrips!)	\$125.00
Merit (2 oz) (for aphids and J. Beetles)	\$65.00
Orthene 97 WP (.773 lb)	\$24.99
Mavrik (quart)	\$145.00
Neem Oil (pint)	\$21.50
Systemic Insect Killer (aka Isotox pint)	\$21.50
Talstar Professional (quart)	\$99.99

I spray early in the morning or late in the afternoon when it is cool. It is best to spray after the dew has evaporated in mornings or before it gets dark in afternoons. Be sure to use a spreader-sticker in your spray mix. The natural oil in rose leaves will cause some high surface tension between the spray solution and the rose leaves. This is what causes the water to "bead up" on the leaf like water does on a waxed table. Unless this surface tension is broken, the spray will not evenly cover (and protect) your plants. **Indicate 5** has been the spreader-sticker of choice for many years and I can't recommend it enough. A quart goes a long way. Simply mix your chemicals in your sprayer and add the Indicate 5 last. Only add enough to turn the water pink. Once it stays pink, you are ready to start spraying

Be sure to choose a sprayer that is right for your garden. For small or medium size gardens, the **EZ Sprayer** is a great



EZ Backpack Sprayer

**4 Gallon
Battery-Powered
10 hr. Battery
Life!
Only \$134.95**

choice if you can carry weight on your back. This 4 gallon battery powered backpack has a 10 hour battery life and has been extremely popular with our customers. **TIP:** Many customers who want

Continued on Next Page

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Special Rosemania Version

**Battery charger,
50 ft. hose,
30" spray wand,
10" wheels.
Now Only
\$419.95**



Continued from previous page

a battery powered sprayer but don't want to carry it have strapped the EZ Sprayer to a dolly. For large gardens or for those who want the best sprayer on the market, you cannot beat the *Spotshot*. The Special Rosemania Version has been customized to our specifications. The 50 ft. hose enables the user to cover large areas without moving the sprayer while the 30"

wand is the perfect length for getting the under-side of leaves while minimizing stooping and bending.

Last, but most important, please wear proper safety equipment when spraying your roses. No pesticide, not even home made remedies are good for your lungs so be sure to wear a pesticide respirator any time you are spraying. Remember, if you can smell it, you are breathing it! A paper mask WILL NOT protect your lungs from pesticide vapors.

I would also highly recommend eye protection (goggles or safety glasses with side shields) and protection for your skin. *Tyvek coveralls* are fantastic for this purpose. After each spray, I hang them up in my garage. They can be used many times before simply throwing them away. This also prevents the need to wash pesticide coated clothing in your washing machine. For the best hand protection use *Nitril Disposable Gloves*. Each box comes with 100 gloves. Use once and throw away.

Always remember to be considerate of your health, the environment and your neighbors when spraying.



Dual Cartridge Respirator

If you can smell it, you are breathing it!

Safety Equipment

Dual Cartridge Respirator	\$34.50
Respirator Replacement Cartridges	\$17.99
Nitril Disposable Gloves	
100/box (sizes S,M,L,XL)	\$19.99
Goat Skin Gloves (S,M,L,XL)	\$15.99
Gauntlet Gloves (S/M,L/XL)	\$40.00
Mud Gloves (XS/S/M/L)	\$8.99
Goggles	\$18.25
Tyvek Coveralls (sizes: S,M,L,XL,XXL)	
1 pair \$9.25; 5 - 9 pairs; price each	\$7.50

Pruners & Loppers

Felco #2 Pruner	\$47.00
Felco #6 Pruner	\$45.00
Felco #7 Pruner (rotating handle)	\$57.00
Felco #8 or #9 Pruner	\$47.00
Felco #12 Pruner	\$52.00
Felco Leather Holster	\$12.95
Replacement Blades	\$13.50
Replacement Spring (2 pack)	\$6.50
Blade/Spring Combo	\$16.50
Felco F-600 Folding Saw	\$27.00
Felco Lubricant Spray	\$13.95
Fiskars PowerGear Pruner	\$29.99
Fiskars Power Gear Loppers	\$29.99
Victorinox Budding Knife	\$21.00

Specialty Products

Milky Spore (10oz)	\$34.00
Indicate 5 (quart)	\$19.95
Indicate 5 (gallon)	\$41.95
Response (quart)	\$24.95
Response (gallon)	\$58.00
Sequestrene 330 Fe	
Chelated Iron (5 lb)	\$45.00
Superthrive (4oz)	\$15.25
Superthrive (16oz)	\$35.00
"T" Stake Rose Markers (25)	\$20.00
"T" Stake Rose Markers (50)	\$33.50
"T" Stake Markers (100)	\$50.00
Brass Siphon Mixer	\$19.99
<u>Showing Good Roses</u>	
(Book by Bob Martin)	\$38.50
<u>Growing Miniature Roses</u>	
(VHS or DVD)	\$17.95
Dip N' Grow (2oz)	\$9.99
Dyna Grow Rooting Gel(4oz)	\$24.95
Dyna Grow Rooting Gel (8oz)	\$45.00
Pro-Tekt (quart)	\$18.99
Pro-Tekt (gallon)	\$35.99

Miticides

Avid (8oz)	\$105.00
Avid (quart)	\$320.00
Floramite SC (quart)	\$249.99
Forbid (New! 8oz)	\$299.95
Hexygon (6oz)	\$175.00

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Don't miss your last chance to order our #1 grade bare-root hybrid teas, climbers and floribundas from *Week's Roses*, as well as our own proprietary miniature roses grown in 3" pots. See our website for our complete rose list with color photos and descriptions.

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