

Magic Garden Roses

Hello and welcome to our 11th newsletter.

Such a busy time of year for everybody with all the rushing around and trying to get things done before Christmas, the last thing you are probably thinking about is how the roses are looking but we are here to calm the nerves so any information we have for you this time can all be done after Christmas in your own relaxed time. Some of you may have time to attend to the feeding now, so if you can, lets get the second feed on right now. We have always recommended 3 feeds of Amgro Organix extra per season. The first being in September, the second (which is now) to be done in December and the final feed in February. You need to spread about 150 grams, which is about one and a half of those washing powder scoops. Just spread it around the base about the size of a dinner plate and wash it in with water to help it start breaking down. Don't dig it in and certainly don't worry if some pellets end up touching the base of the rose. That's not an issue.



before summer pruning



after summer pruning

Feeding now will promote strong regrowth from rose stems that have been cut back. Cutting back should be done after the first flush of flowers have finished. What's that I hear? You haven't cut them back yet? Well let's just get that done now as we don't want to end up with tall straggly growth. It shouldn't take more than a minute to trim back 2 rose plants and you will be rewarded with beautiful healthy regrowth at a nice level with double the amount of roses. (And larger buds!) Giving them a good trim is a very important part of keeping them looking great and you can get twice as many roses in a season as opposed to letting them go and just pruning them once a year in Winter. What I am talking about is summer pruning not just "de-heading". This

is a term we should really stop using in the rose growing trade. We have to cut more than just clipping the heads out otherwise we end up with a very messy tall rose plant that will de-foliate all its bottom leaves.

People always ask us when is the best time to cut them back in Summer. That is very easy and the answer is simply when the rose has finished blooming. There is no certain time throughout the season to start cutting back as all roses flower at different times and have to be attended to when blooms are finished. Most roses will flush at the same time in early spring but after that it varies between the different varieties.

If I was to be more precise with the information on feeding, I would say that feeding should be applied after your roses have been cut back, after each flush. Realistically who wants to pull out the fertilizer out every week and do a little here and a little there. They should however all be ready for a cut back early December which means you can feed all your roses at the same time. Some varieties may not be ready to get their first Summer prune. That's fine as they can be trimmed back a little later than the others, its just that when you feed them, you may notice that the buds will spoil quicker after feeding as the plants growing process starts to speed up.



Cutting back is very easy. We all know that roses vary in height so with the tall ones, we need to remove around 75% of those long stems leaving a quarter. That way you are leaving a good strong base stem to support the next lot of shoots that reappear. With the shorter varieties, you can leave a bit more on as you need to build up shorter growing varieties but keep tall varieties controlled. That way you will end up with a much more even looking rose garden.

healthy regrowth after cutting back and feeding

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We have told everybody about controlling black spot and powdery mildew with Kendon Triforine in past newsletters and how to control aphids and thrip but there is one thing that roses get that we have never been able to give you a cure for and that is red spider. That is up until now! Being commercial growers, we have magnificent safe and effective sprays but there is nothing that I have seen on the market for the home gardener that really knocks them. Most sprays available to you just give them a head ache and they will return very quickly. The product we are recommending is Vertimec. We have used Vertimec for many, many years. It kills red spider dead in its tracks but it does not kill its eggs. To get rid of the eggs, you have to understand the cycle of red spider mite, so read the following carefully, you can always contact us if you need more information.

Vertimec has to be sprayed underneath the leaves and you must also repeat the spray underneath again to kill the ones that hatch within 10 -12 days and then you also have to do a third repeat spray 10-12 days after that again. This repeat spraying is very important, the first spray underneath the leaves will only kill the living red spider but where there is red spider, there is thousands of unhatched eggs to. Look under the leaves and if you look closely, you will see the red spider mite eggs. It looks like salt under the leaves. The second spray will knock those babies out when they hatch and then the third spray will get rid of any remaining hatched mites that may have been missed earlier.



It may sound a bit daunting but we are giving this real information to home gardeners for the first time. It has been no secret, its just that Vertimec has simply been so expensive to purchase. It only comes in a 5 litre bottle for around \$300 and you only need 2ml per 5 litres of water so that would last a few life times for the average gardener. If you belong to a garden group and shared 100ml between everybody, that would be a good way to buy. People who have used it following our information report overwhelming success with people very impressed with the health of their roses. We are trying very hard to source a small quantity supplier and we will e-mail you all with our progress on this.

Another last tip. I have never seen azaleas without red spider. The first flush of azaleas always looks nice and then bang! Red spider gets in and the rest of the year they look horrible. Azaleas are a host for red spider as they flower before the roses, so if you have azaleas - you will always have red spider mite. Now before you get your trusty spade out of the shed - just spray the azaleas in the exactly same way as we recommend with the roses. I can tell you confidently if you spray Vertimec on azaleas, you will have never have seen azaleas as healthy in your life.

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Our hours over Christmas. Closed from Christmas day and re-open Saturday morning the 6th of January at 10 am. (Yes, we are actually closing for 10 days this year!)



We hope you have enjoyed this lengthy newsletter and most of all we would all like to wish you a very safe and Happy Christmas. Do take care through this hectic time of year and we look forward in seeing all in good health next time.

All the best from all of us here at Magic Garden Roses!

Peter Boerlage

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