

Wally's Weekly News 10th October 2009
Written by Wally Richards.

ROSES IN THE SPRING

I received an email from a lady gardener this week asking about what she could do to keep her roses healthy this season.

The email read: Hello Wally, you have probably been asked the same questions over and over, but as I am unfamiliar with your 'healthy plants' program, can I question you on the program for my 100 plus roses. I need to know what products and sequence preferred for the season, to cover rose disease but also dreaded aphids, which I have now just started to get already. I have been told **Perkfection** is a must which I have already and the **Raingard** mix. Thanks, Kaye.

My reply was: Hi Kaye, Firstly it depends on what you put into the soil on how healthy your roses will be.

Completely avoid chemicals; including fertilisers and sprays as they destroy the soil food web and worm life, this includes chlorinated water. (Also includes using any chemical herbicides near them.)

Otherwise the natural products are only going to achieve so much and the root cause of the rose's health is not attended to.

Natural products include animal manures, blood & bone, gypsum, dolomite, potash, magnesium and compost.

If you have good worm populations, your soil is healthy; if you do not then there is a problem.

Yes **Perkfection** will help build a roses immune system when used once a month at the lower rate for the first 6-7 months of the season.

Then use Bi-monthly the second season, quarterly the third, twice a year there after unless a specific problem occurs. (spring and autumn.) There is no point putting **Raingard** with **Perkfection**.

Give all the roses about a teaspoon of Rok **Solid** into the root zone, repeat in early autumn.

A few grains of **OrganiBor** could also be applied and repeated about 3 years later.

Water some **Magic Botanic Liquid** (MBL) into the root zone of each rose, spray foliage with the same about every 2 weeks. **Mycorrcin** can be added to these to increase the benefits.

For aphids simply lather up some old cake sunlight soap and spray the pests with it.

Alternatively spray with **Neem Tree Oil** with **Key Pyrethrum** added and then use just prior to dusk.

For any other pest insects use the latter (such as scale)

For black spot and powdery mildew; spray baking soda by placing one or two heaped tablespoons per litre of water with **Raingard** added. This will assist in both prevention and control.

For rust spray the plants with a mild solution of **potassium permanganate** (Condys Crystals)

Normally a definite improvement is noted in the first season which only gets better as the years roll on.

Regards, Wally Richards

The above will not only assist in retaining the healthy growth of roses through most of the season till they are coming to an end in the autumn but can be applied to any other plants in the garden for the same benefits. Vegetables and fruit should be treated in this manner for better crops.

The use of non-chlorinated water is vital as the chlorine knocks back the beneficial microbes, fungi and worm populations. The chlorine can be simply removed from the tap water with a 10 micron carbon filter unit or by standing tap water in an open vessel for a day or so in sunlight. Placing an air stone with air pump into the water to bubble away will speed up the chlorine removal as will a water fountain.

Talking about water I also received a very interesting email with pictures which originated from a School Science Project. The project was to determine whether two lots of tap water heated in different ways would have any significant difference. Half the water was boiled on a stove and other half boiled in a microwave oven. To determine if there was a difference in the water after cooling they were applied it to two identical seedlings, potted up and placed in a sunny spot.

One would be watered as it needed moisture with the microwave water the other with the normal boiled water. The results as shown in the pictures astounded the students involved and made a number of people reconsider the use of microwave ovens for heating or cooking food.

From the pictures which were taken every second day; this is what occurred:

Day 1; the plants which look like primula seedlings look great and the one receiving microwave water appears a bit big and better potted than the other one.

Day 3; things have changed greatly the microwaved water plant has gone backwards and is not looking good where the other plant has grown and is a picture of health.

Day 5; The microwaved water plant has lost many of its leaves and lost colour, looks poorly, the other plant is growing nicely.

Day 7; now the microwaved water plant has lost all but one sick looking leaf at the base, the other plant is growing well.

Day 9; the microwaved watered plant is now dead and other plant has preformed as one would expect and is very healthy.

The sender also added a footnote to the pictures which reads; I have known for years that the problem with microwaved anything is not the radiation people used to worry about, It's how it corrupts the DNA in the food so the body can not recognize it. So the body wraps it in fat cells to protect itself from the dead food or it eliminates it fast. Think of all the Mothers heating up milk in these "Safe" appliances. What about the nurse in Canada that warmed up blood for a transfusion patient and accidentally killed them when the blood went in dead. But the makers say it's safe. Never mind then, keep using them. Ask your Doctor I am sure they will say it's safe too. Proof is in the pictures of living plants dying. Remember You are also Living. Take Care. (signed)

I personally have avoided using a microwave oven for many years but find its great for sterilizing my dish washing cloths. Funnily enough another gardener I was talking to this week also told me of another school where a very similar experiment was conducted. They had more plants which each one was watered with a different type of water, these were, rainwater, tap chlorinated water, filtered water and microwaved water. Results were; Microwaved plant dead, chlorinated water plant ok but not as good as the filtered watered plant, healthiest one at end of the trial was the rain watered one.

Bit like the poor microwave watered plants in the two school trials. Our health is our most important asset and it is dumb to do things that interfere with our general well being, even if it's a slow process that progressively undermines our health such as microwave use; it killed the seedlings.

I note with interest this also; I obtain raw milk from a certified organic farmer, my dogs love this milk and the bowl is quickly emptied. On odd occasions I purchase standard milk from a shop and put it in their bowl, days later its still there. Animals have more sense than us when it comes to food unless they are starving. Makes one think.

Problems ring me at 0800 466 464 (Palmerston North 06 3570606)