

Wally's Weekly News 6th JUNE 2009  
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### COMING UP ROSES

Several gardeners have asked me recently the following question; 'What to do with our roses now?'

Likely at this time the roses are in an in between state of losing foliage as they go into dormancy for the winter months. Some may still have flowers and buds and if you have not removed them, they will have seed pods which are called Rose Hips.

These rose hips will contain seeds from which you can harvest and germinate to obtain new young rose plants. What they will turn out to be like is anyone's guess, but they will be roses in their own right and will vary from a possible good specimen to a so-so rose. If you wish to try this all you need to do is cut off the rose hips and allow them to dry on a window sill then harvest the seeds there in.

Germinate them as you would any other seeds in a seedling tray.

Another alternative is to use the rose hips in floral decoration, cut the branch sporting the hips off at a suitable length for the vase you wish to use, remove any foliage as it will fall anyway.

They can be used in both dry and living arrangements.

Now what to do with your bush and standard roses?

As it is now June we should give our roses a winter rest so they perform best this coming season.

This means even if they are sporting nice blooms you should cut the canes (branches) back to half their length. Remove all the debris and then spray what is left of the canes with Lime Sulphur to burn off any diseases, pests and remaining foliage. If the soil under the roses is free of plants then spray the soil surface with the same.

Alternative to spraying with Lime Sulphur would be to use **Liquid Copper**, not so effective in the clean up, but better than not spraying at all.

What you have achieved is to send the roses into dormancy but not performed the actual pruning which will come later, say about the end of July or into August.

If we were to prune the roses at this time we could cause new growths to appear which are likely to be damaged by frost or cold winds. If by chance this half cut was to produce any new growths they would likely be higher up the cane and would be removed anyway with the final pruning.

If you have any potash or wood ash from a fire this can be sprinkled around the roses now.

If you have a lot of garden area and would like a few free roses then the canes that you have cut back can be used as cuttings to create new plants.

Select the roses you wish to propagate and take about 16cm long cuttings and push these into the soil in a suitable location, burying the bottom of the cutting about 6cm into the earth.

Some of these cuttings if not all of them will root up in the spring, produce new foliage and once established can be carefully lifted and transferred to a new rose bed or border to mature.

If you have a friend that has a rose that you admire, ask them for a few cuttings.

They will come true to the parent.

About now the new seasons roses will be arriving at your garden centres and those of you that have ordered roses will be able to collect them.

The roses will be either potted up in bags or bare rooted in sawdust.

If potted up you can take them home and just keep the mix moist till you are ready to plant them out.

If they are bare rooted then you need to keep the roots moist till you are ready to plant them out and the best way to do this is to dig a hole and place the roots in the hole covered with moist soil.

Several roses can be held in the same hole.

When you are ready to plant out, lift the roses carefully so as not to damage the roots and wrap them in wet newspaper. It is very important that the roots are kept moist, if allowed to dry out they can fail.

Roses need to be planted in a full sun situation if you want the best out of them.

If you have a heavy clay soil then you need to mix either peat moss or compost with the soil 50/50. The same also applies to light sandy soils but make it 70% compost and 30% sandy soil.

The above can be mixed in a wheel barrow as you are digging the planting holes. Surplus soil can be used elsewhere in the gardens.

Make the planting hole about twice the size needed to give a nice area for root establishment.

Fill the bottom of the planting hole to the right height with the mix. The right height will be when the rose's roots are just sitting on top of the mix and the beginning of the trunk is level with the surrounding soil.

Place a tablespoon of gypsum sprinkled over the mix at the bottom of the hole along with a teaspoon of **Red Solid** and a half teaspoon of **BioPhos**.

These products will greatly assist in developing a strong root system which means a stronger healthier rose. You may also like to place about a tablespoon of **Neem Tree Granules** as this will help protect the roots from grubs.

Once these products have been sprinkled over the mix cover lightly with a little more mix.

Sit your new rose in the planting hole and carefully back fill the hole with more mix until the hole is filled. You can finish off by watering some **Magic Botanic Liquid (MBL)** over the rose and planting hole. If there is a dry period during winter then give the area a good drink once a week.

The roses you buy have not been pruned, only cut back similar to what I have recommended to do with your existing roses. This means later on you will give them their first pruning.

It is very important that you keep the soil around new roses moist for the first year in the ground, after that they are fairly able to look after themselves.

Standard roses will likely need a stake to support them while their roots are establishing and this stake should be hammered into the planting hole on the side where the prevailing wind comes from.

The Standard rose is then planted next to the stake and secured with suitable ties.

Placing on the prevailing wind side means the rose is buffered away from the stake, not against it to cause damage.

In the spring when you do the final pruning spray the plant with **Liquid Copper** and

sprinkle some **Fruit and Flower Power** over the soil surface along with some **Neem Tree Granules**.

Repeat this about every 6 weeks.

This will give the roses the magnesium and potash that the plants need and the **Neem Granules** will help with the control of aphids.

I have had a few good reports that the **Neem granules** greatly reduce the need for spraying the roses for aphids. You can however spray the plants two weekly with the **MBL** for healthier plants and better flowering.

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