

## An Organic Rose Program

Howard Garrett

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Roses should only be grown organically, since they are one of the best medicinal and culinary herbs in the world. When they are loaded with toxic pesticides and other chemicals, that use is gone. Or at least it should be. Drinking rose hip tea or using rose petals in teas or salads after spraying the plants with synthetic poisons is a really bad idea. For best results with roses, here's the program I recommend:

**Selection** Buy and plant adapted roses such as antiques, David Austins and well-proven hybrids. The old roses will have the largest and most Vitamin C- filled hips. R. roses have the most vitamin C.

**Planting** Prepare beds by mixing the following into existing soil to form a raised bed: (amounts based on *per 1000-sq. feet*) 6" compost, ½" lava sand, ½" of decomposed granite, 20-lbs. of alfalfa meal, 20-lbs. of cottonseed meal, 10-lbs of wheat bran/cornmeal soil amendment, 20-lbs. of sul-po-mag. Soak the bare roots or rootball in water with 1 tablespoon of seaweed per gallon. Settle soil around plants with water—no tamping.

**Mulching** After planting, cover all the soil in the beds with one inch of compost or earthworm castings followed by 2-3" of shredded native cedar. Do not pile the mulch up on the stems of the roses.

**Watering** If possible, save and use rainwater. If not, add 1 tablespoon of natural apple cider vinegar per gallon of water. If all that fails, just use tap water but don't over-water. Avoid salty well water.

### Fertilizing Program

**Round #1, Feb 1-15.** Organic fertilizer @ 20 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft., lava sand at 80 lbs per 1,000 sq. ft., and horticulture cornmeal at 10 lbs per 1,000 sq. ft.

**Round #2, Jun 1-15.** Organic fertilizer @ 2 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft., Texas greensand @40 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft., or soft rock phosphate at 30 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. if in acid soil areas.

**Round #3, Sep 15-30.** Organic fertilizer @ 20 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft., sul-po-mag @ 20 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. In sandy, acid soils, use soft rock phosphate instead at 30 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft.

**Twice monthly** foliar feed with Garrett Juice\*

### Pest Control Program

Add the following to Garrett Juice\* and spray as needed:

**Garlic tea** 1 cup per gallon or label directions for minor insect or disease infestations.

**Citrus oil, orange oil or d-limonene** 1 oz. per gallon of water as a spray, 2 oz. per gallon as a drench

**Potassium bicarbonate** 1 rounded tbsp. per gallon for fungal diseases.

**Liquid biostimulants** Use per label.

**Neem** Use per label directions for more serious insect and disease infestations.

**Fish emulsion** 2 oz. per gallon for additional nutrients (may not be needed when using compost tea).

### **Spray Schedule**

1<sup>st</sup> spraying at pink bud in the spring. 1<sup>st</sup> two sprayings should include Garrett Juice\* and garlic tea. Additional sprayings as necessary. For best results, spray every two weeks, but at least once a month. When soil is healthy, nothing but Garrett Juice\* is needed in the spray.

### **\*Recipe for Garrett Juice**

Mix the following per gallon of water: 1 cup of compost tea or liquid humate, 1 oz. liquid seaweed, 1 oz. blackstrap molasses, 1 oz. apple cider vinegar. **To make a mild insect control product, add 1 oz. of citrus oil per gallon of spray. To make the fire ant killer, add 2 oz. of citrus oil per gallon.** When spraying the foliage of plants, don't use over 2 oz. of citrus oil per gallon of spray. This mixture also works as a soil detox product. Garrett Juice can be used as a foliar spray and as a soil drench.