

The Bulletin Deep South District

To do in March, April & May – Vasta Yarbrough, CR, Bainbridge, GA - 1999

The first thing I did for my roses in January was to apply lime needed to bring the soil to a 6.5 pH. This was determined from the soil test done in December. This is very important, not only to get your pH right, but to also determine the nutrients needed to be applied in fertilizer such as iron, minor elements etc.

The last week in January, prune Floribundas, Minis, and cut all excessive growth from the Old Garden roses and climbers. By mid-February, prune the HT's and Grandifloras to knee-high, leaving only good, strong, healthy canes and clearing out the middle. By the time the new roses have arrived and when planting be sure to mound up the dirt over the new canes to keep them from drying out.

After pruning all the roses, clean all the old straw and leaves out. Spray well with Lime-Sulphur according to directions. Apply Spectracide and Diazinon granules over the entire rose bed. This helps control Midge. I have had Downy Mildew in the past, so I scatter 2 tablespoons Subdue Granules around each bush as a preventative. For good strong stems, apply 1/2 cup K-Mag to each bush, also apply 1/2 cup land plaster (Gypsum) for calcium needs. Apply 2 cups of Mills Magic or other organics around each bush. Then take a four-prong fork and work around each bush, loosening the soil. This also helps to get the fertilizer into the ground to start working.

While roses are still dormant, spray with Benlate (1/2 tablespoons per gallon) and Manzate (1/2 tablespoons per gallon). Dithane M-45 (1 tablespoon per gallon) is also a good dormant spray.

Around the 1st of March apply fertilizer recommended by soil test. Usually a good brand of 15-0-13 1/2 with iron and minor elements is really good. Mulch heavy with pine straw or some other mulch.

As soon as the roses start putting on leaves, start a weekly spraying of Triforine (1 teaspoon per gallon) mixed with Mavrik (2 teaspoons per gallon). If you do not have Triforine, use Immunox according to directions or Clearys 336 (1/2 teaspoon per gallon). When bushes are covered in leaves, spray with Rubigan (2 teaspoons per 5 gallons). This will control mildew. This must be done until the weather warms up.

In April start applying liquid solutions of Peters 20-20-20 at the rate of 1 tablespoon per bush, 1 tablespoon per gallon of Sequestrene 330 FE and 1 tablespoon of fish emulsion per gallon. If time permits, do this every week or at least every week. In sandy loam, roses need at least 2 inches of water per week.

If by chance (I usually do) you see signs of mites, use a water wand. If this does not work, start applying Avid (1/2 teaspoons per gallon). Do this two weeks in a row and then the third week spray with Vendex (1 1/2 teaspoons per gallon). If this should fail to rid your bushes of mites, start with Avid and repeat.

During April, there is likely to be some heavy frost. If you wash this off before the sun shines on the bushes there will be little damage. Keep all the dead-heads cut out and hope the roses will bloom in time for the Rose Show. Good luck!