

## Jose Gonzales's Rose Care Advice for a Season of Sensational Blooms!

### FEBRUARY-MARCH:

Prune first, then rake the area clean, discarding ALL old foliage, rose canes, rose hips, even the top layer of soil- these all carry pathogens from last year's growth that can spread disease to the new spring growth.

You can prune 1/3 of your rose plant back, and if you have a vigorous grower, you can prune as much as 2/3rds of the plant back. Remove diseased, damaged, dead and crossing branches.

After cleaning the Rose area, fertilize (Jose's secret recipe is below), placing the fertilizer in the interior of the drip line, close to the base of the rose. Lightly work the fertilizer mixture into the soil with cultivator. Cover with a layer of good quality compost and spread smooth: **EBS Planting Compost** works well, as does **Cedar Grove Compost**.

### FERTILIZING

Roses are heavy feeders, partly due to the fact they've been highly cultivated and hybridized for centuries. They are used to, and expect, care, attention, and fertilizer.

Roses *can* survive without being fertilized, but they struggle. A few **exceptions** include: roses that are used to growing in the wild and have adapted to neglect such as ***Rosa Mundi, Rosa glauca, Rosa rugosa, Rosa Chinensis mutabilis, and Rosa banksiae.***

To successfully grow repeat-blooming roses, like hybrid teas and floribundas, the gardener should fertilize regularly during the growing season.

Here's Jose's **Not-So-Secret Rose Fertilizer recipe:**

~1 - 2 cups (depending on size of Rose) of **EBS Rose and Flower Food** or other similar high quality, organic rose food.

~1 - 1.5 cups of **Alfalfa Meal**.

~up to 1 cup of **Superphosphate** (can also substitute other Phosphorus source)

~½ - 1 cups of **Epsom Salts** (Magnesium Sulfate)

\* and if you want, Azomite-Mineral-Rock Dust: supplies minerals and micronutrients

You can **repeat this program** again in late **June or July** for abundant, vibrant blooms through summer into fall. Deadhead throughout the growing season when blooms are spent to promote new buds to form and develop.

**Growing roses in containers?** Go with liquid fertilizer. In particular, EB Stone Fish Emulsion with Kelp for the beginning of the season, and then switch to MAX SEA Bloom Blend. Mix these with water and water in to pot at recommended rates. Repeat application every 2 to 3 weeks. Cut back liquid fertilizer in late August.

**SEPTEMBER-JANUARY:**

Prune back any canes that are in the way of paths and walkways. Remove any dead or diseased canes/branches.

Remove leaves in January-February if desired.

Clean and sharpen tools for upcoming pruning season.

Enjoy the blooms - we'll often get blooms through December as our weather can stay somewhat mild.