

June is Rose Month

James A. Fizzell

Sr. Ext. Adviser, Horticulture

June is the month set aside to honor everyone's favorite flower. Roses have a place in every yard, and there are no secrets to having beautiful roses.

SITE SELECTION comes first. Roses need at least six hours of sunshine each day. Failures usually result if gardeners pick sites that please them rather than the roses. So, avoid shady areas.

DRAINAGE is second only to sunlight in importance. Roses need a soil that is well drained or the plants will have difficulty surviving the winter. It may be necessary to build raised beds to provide adequate drainage in some area.

ANY GOOD GARDEN SOIL will produce roses. Heavy soils and sandy soils can both be improved by adding organic matter such as peat moss, leafmold, or composted animal manure. Spade 3 to 6 inches of the organic matter into the top 6 to 8 inches of soil.

SELECT PLANTS with thick canes which show no signs of shriveling, and choose only varieties recommended for this area. Dig the hole deep enough so the bud union is just at the soil level when planting is completed.

ROSES ARE AVAILABLE now in containers so they can be planted anytime. This makes selection more fun too, since you can see what the blooms will look like.

THE IMPORTANT THING about cutting, is knowing where to cut. Starting at the flower, examine the stem until you find a leaf with five leaflets on it. Above this five-leaflet leaf you will see leaves with three leaflet and possibly some single leaves. Fully developed leaves with five-leaflets are most likely to accompany buds that are mature enough to develop into strong flower-bearing stems. By cutting just about a 5-leaflet leaf in the middle of the stem, sufficient foliage will be left on the plant but you will provide adequate stems for cut flowers too.

Floribundas which bear clusters of flowers are not usually used as cut flowers but faded blooms should be cut to stimulate continued flowering. As each bloom in a cluster fades, remove it. And when the last blossom in the cluster is gone, cut the stem back to a point one-quarter of an inch above the first five-leaflet leaf.

Taking too much stem, when cutting can harm roses. A bloom cut with a long stem takes a large number of leaves and the reduction of foliage may slow growth delaying further blooms.

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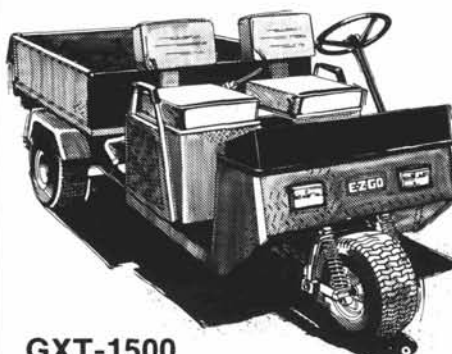
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