

# Roses Respond to Autumn Attention

By MARK M. TAYLOR  
For the Register-Guard

Next spring's loveliness is due to activity and planning done now before the fall weather changes to winter and defers most garden activities.

Fall is the perfect time to prepare those prize exhibition blooms that will take top honors at next year's rose shows, or to change your rose planting to the new, fresh ideas you have been dreaming of during the past growing season. And it is the best time to augment your plantings to include the best of the new roses that have been tried and tested for quality and will be available for the first time this fall.

With visions of the fine roses you saw at this year's shows and the highly touted new varieties that have been

featured in garden magazines recently, you can build yourself a dream garden of roses.

You will, of course, want to take special note of the two top-notch roses that will highlight many rose gardens in 1963.

The two 1963 All-America rose selections, "Royal Highness," a breathtakingly beautiful hybrid tea in shell pink, and "Tropicana," a startling orange-red hybrid tea, both belong in fall planting plans.

Setting out plants in the fall has been gaining many followers among amateur growers in recent years. The cue has come from the professional landscape architect and the experienced amateur who were quick to see the advantage of fall planting in the temperate regions of the country. Planted now, bushes get a head start on spring.

They become established quickly, before the ground freezes and they develop good root systems. This assures quality and quantity production next spring.

Tropicana had its origin near the Black Forest preserve in Germany. The first steps in its development date back 27 years, with the initial crossing made by the noted German hybridist, Mathias Tantau Sr., in 1937. Progressive breedings were made until 1954. The final breeding was accomplished in 1955 by Mathias Tantau, son of the famous hybridizer. He estimates that some 100,000 seedlings resulted in the progression to obtain the winner.

Tropicana claims the famous "Peace" as its grandfather. It was produced from the cross-pollination of a "Peace" seedling and an "Al-

pine Glow" seedling. When the roses are bred, thousands of seedlings may be the result.

The plant itself is remarkable. Growing from 3 to 5 feet tall, it is heavily branched and clothed with rugged foliage. It is adaptable to all parts of the country.

The flowers have a luminous, magnetic quality. It has the classic rose shape and is almost always in bloom.

Tropicana has been described as "an arresting and ravishingly beautiful rose—a dream rose."

Royal Highness, the other All-America award winner, has long, patrician buds and high-centered, exhibition flowers (never balling, never split). It opens to 6-inch blooms with a soft, pastel pink in the center, and a bit

lighter tint toward the edge. Its 4-foot bushes are clothed with heavy, large, dark green leaves that nearly hide the canes. Blooms are abundant and each is produced with a fine, long stem. Its fragrance is elusive, but definitely there. It appears to be able to withstand hot summers very well. It is, definitely, a show rose and we predict that many of these alabasters will be used in 1963 rose shows.

Of course, there is more to do in the rose garden now than just plant new roses. The ones already there and growing will appreciate a little attention, too.

The first interest is in pruning. Although major pruning is deferred until late February or March, long canes should be shortened now to keep them from whipping about in the wind and

inflicting further damage to the plant. While doing this, remove any dead branches, too.

When the leaves have fallen from your rose bushes, it is time to apply a dormant spray. We prefer to use a micronized copper to which a spreader-sticker designed for the purpose has been added. When spraying the bushes, be sure to reach every branch and twig and make sure that the spray penetrates any crevices in the bark.

Then, as you are finishing up, it's a good idea to spray the ground directly beneath each bush—after raking up all debris, of course. The spores of fungus diseases delight in hiding over in the soil or old refuse, so this is but an added precaution that may pay big dividends.

## Proper Care Will Bring Out Extra Beauty in House Plants

Here are some timely tips on selecting plants and keeping them in the best possible health and growth for greater, easier indoor gardening enjoyment, now that fall is upon us.

It is wise to buy your plants from a nearby supplier. There's a lot to be said for climate-conditioning—even for indoor plants. A flowering or foliage plant grown in a local nursery, for instance, will be accustomed to the normal light and day length for your area. One from another part of the country, such as a tropical plant, will have been subjected to entirely different conditions and will require a period of adjustment.

A professionally grown plant that comes to you in its porous clay pot is generally in tip-top condition. The soil is fertile and of the right mixture for the plant, the plant has been fed in the greenhouse and it has been sprayed or dusted to keep pests under control.

Your first concern is to keep it properly watered and to give it the right amount of sun.

### Warm Water

Water should be slightly warmer than room temperature, since cold water will chill the plant and cause possible setback. Plants in clay pots are easier to water than those in other containers since the drainage hole at the bottom of the pot and the many breathing pores in the pot walls are insurance against over-watering.

A soil that is too wet will dry out quickly enough so that roots do not become waterlogged with subsequent plant damage. Plants grown in limited light will need less water than those in strong light.

Feeding need not begin until you have had the plant a month. Then you can use a quick-acting soluble fertilizer that will be available to the plant as soon as it is applied. For regular feeding this is the best type to use, since results are fast.

In fact tests have shown that a fertilizer made especially for leaf feeding (it can also be applied to the soil) has already been absorbed by the plant an hour after feeding.

Organic fertilizers like fish emulsion are also excellent. Follow package directions in

applying any plant food. You will find that the main chemical elements plants need are incorporated in the plant food and the percentages of these main elements—nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium are printed on each package.

For instance, the numbers 2-12-12 mean 2 per cent nitrogen, 12 per cent phosphorus, and 12 per cent potassium—and the numbers always appear in that order—nitrogen first, then phosphorus and potash.

For foliage plants, select a plant food that is high in nitrogen since this is needed for leaf growth. For flowering plants, choose one with a greater percentage of phosphorus since this is needed by the plants to produce flowers and fruits and seeds. Potassium also help fruit and seed formation and fleshy root growth—are good for bulbs and rhizomes.

Be careful not to overfeed plants. Excessive feedings may burn root hairs and eventually kill the plants.

### Spray Once a Month

To leach away harmful salts between applications of plant food, stand the clay pot in the sink and water the plant from the soil surface plentifully enough so that water runs freely through the drainage hole. To keep breathing pores of the pot open, wash the pot occasionally with a stiff brush and clear water.

Once a month spray the plants with a pressure-type house plant bomb—the easiest and most efficient method for a small decorative collection of house plants. For larger collections, it will be more economical to use a malathion spray, mixed according to container instructions. Dusts are also available, but sprays are easier to use indoors.

When the plant outgrows its clay pot, select another a size larger for transplanting. Place a piece of broken clay pot over the drainage hole, fill in an inch or two of gravel for drainage and then add a soil mixture of equal parts sterilized packaged potting soil, peatmoss and perlite. This basic house plant soilmixture is fine for the majority of house plants. Even cacti and ferns will thrive in it and unless you are a specialist in just one kind of plant, it is wisest to stick to this soil mixture for all your plants.

## Questions and Answers

Q—Do strawberries need a winter protection?—K.F.

A—Yes, they do need some winter protection if the winters are cold enough. While it is not usual in this area, if the winter is severe (below 20 degrees F.) straw, hay, evergreen boughs or compost can be put to good use. Use the mulch after the hard, early frosts have hit. Sawdust or pine needles may be used, too. If you must use leaves, make the mulch considerably lighter to avoid smothering the plants.

Q—How can I make sure my amaryllis will bloom?

Last year the bulb produced leaves but no flower stalk.—H.J.

A—Plant bulbs from November to February and enrich the soil with bonemeal. Potting soil should be equal parts loam, leafmold and sand. Set the bulb in the pot so there is two-thirds above the soil line and about a half-inch space between bulb and edge of pot all around. Fertilize in April and stake when 10 inches tall. Pinch off side shoots as they appear and shift bulb to larger pot as it grows until mid-August. Bring indoors and stop feeding by September.

## Silk Tree Popular Choice For Dooryard Areas

The rapid growth of the silk tree, *Albizia Julibrissin* (as much as 12 feet a year), its grace and prolonged blossoming have made it a popular dooryard choice. A pest, the mimosa webworm, can be controlled with a malathion spray.

A Cornell University horticulturist says a level teaspoonful of a household detergent in one quart of water will bring partly wilted flowers back to life. However, keeping the flowers in the detergent water more than two hours might poison them.

Garden clean-up at this season is most important. First, when cleaning up the rose bed, do not put rose twigs and leaves in the compost pile. They may be severely infected with disease that would continue to survive there. Destroy such garden refuse.

A great number of tropical foliage plants, varied in color, texture and form, are available today to homeowners for uses throughout the home. Since many grow in subdued light, they thrive indoors on tables, mantels or cabinets, as well as at focal points in entrances or living rooms. The ease of culture and adaptability to adverse conditions make these plants of today and tomorrow practical and useful wherever placed.

The winter pruning may be too late for berry growers anxious to avoid the spread of leaf and cane spot, warns Duane Hatch, Lane extension agent in horticulture.

He urges growers to prune out old fruiting canes as soon as possible — before fall rains wash disease-causing spores on new canes. Once pruned, the bushes should be sprayed with Bordeaux 8-8-100. Both old and new canes should be thoroughly covered.

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## Tools Need Careful Cleaning, Storage

Idleness could be tougher on your lawn and garden tools than the heavy use you gave them all during the season.

If you remember to put things away clean you will have gone a long way in preventing damage.

Grass and pruning shears

are generally caked with dirt, oil and juice from the plants you've been cutting. Clean with kerosene. Finish up with a wire brush and emery cloth. File cutting edges so they will be sharp. Coat surfaces with oil to prevent rusting.

Hoes, rakes, spades and

shovels will have an accumulation of soil that can be cleaned off easily. Sand off any rust spots. File edges of hoes and spades. Straighten bent tools.

Check wooden handles for splinters, cracks or splits. Sand rough areas. Coat handles with linseed oil.

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