

# ROSES...Queen of the Garden

## Planting, Care & Feeding



Roses are fragrant, beautiful and wonderfully suited to our Valley. The Livermore-Amador area is known as the Valley of Wine and Roses! Along with vineyards, fields of roses were once grown here by all the major rose growers including Jackson and Perkins. Our climate is one of the world's best to grow beautiful roses.

Alden Lane carries the widest selection of top-quality roses in the Valley. You can choose from new introductions and pick from old favorites. There is a rose for everyone!

Roses may be the flowers of love, but there's nothing romantic about a bush that doesn't produce beautiful blooms. Don't worry: with a little tender loving care, your roses will be pretty as a picture.

### CHOOSE THE RIGHT SITE

Roses love sunshine and warmth, so choose a sunny spot with at least 6 hours of direct sunlight. The soil should drain reasonably well; to test your drainage, dig a hole about a foot deep and fill it with water. If the water drains within 3 or 4 hours, fill it again. If it takes longer than 3 or 4 hours to drain on the first or second fill, you have poor drainage. In this situation, it's best to plant in another location or create a raised bed so that your rose can be planted above grade.

Lastly, good air circulation is also important as this helps to discourage disease. A crowded rose is not a happy rose! Some roses grow larger than others, so consider their expected mature size when spacing your plants. Most bush roses should be planted at least 30 inches apart.

If garden space is limited, you can plant your rose in a container. A ½ wine barrel, redwood tub or extra-large pot will maintain your plant for years.

### PLANTING

Our roses are planted in earth-friendly, biodegradable planting pots filled with a special soil mix fortified with slow-release fertilizer. This avoids transplant shock and allows your plant to establish and bloom earlier. We suggest you have the following items you will need for planting: **Master Nursery Master Start** (starter fertilizer) and **Master Nursery Rose Planting Mix** (soil conditioner).

#### Follow these 4 simple steps:

1. Dig a hole 6-8" wider than the pot and mix the native soil from the hole with an equal amount of **Rose Planting Mix**. Add ½ cup **Master Start** to the mix. Put enough of this mixture into the base of the hole to bring the soil level in the pot even with ground level.
2. Turn the pot on its side. Put a serrated knife into one of the bottom drain holes and cut the bottom of the pot off. Make two slices into the pot lip and team the rim off with your hand, about ½ inch below the soil.
3. Set the rose plant, pot and all, into the hole. Fill around the pot with the prepared soil mix. Gently firm the soil as you go.
4. Water the root zone deeply and thoroughly.



**Alden Lane Nursery**

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# ROSES...Queen of the Garden (Cont'd)

## FERTILIZE

The first feeding of your roses should be done when the bush first leafs out in late winter or early spring. In February & August, apply the mixture detailed in our informational handout entitled "Rose Clinic Spray and Feeding Recommendations." For the rest of the growing season, apply **Master Nursery Rose & Flower** fertilizer after each flush of blooms (roughly every 6 to 8 weeks). Scratch the fertilizer into the soil surface at the drip line and water thoroughly. Stop fertilizing about 2 months before the first frost (generally mid-November in our area so make September the last feeding).

## MULCH

Mulch helps minimize weeds, keeps the soil moist and loose, and protects roots from temperature extremes. Organic mulch is best - try wood chips, shredded bark, pine needles, cocoa-bean hulls, or chipped oak leaves. Apply in the spring as the soil begins to warm, but before weeds begin to grow. Mulch can also be applied anytime during the growing season provided weeds are removed and soil surface is lightly cultivated. Spread 2 to 4 inches over the rose bed, leaving an area of bare soil at the base of each rose - about a 6-inch radius.

## WATERING

Seldom can you rely on rainfall to be an adequate source of roses. The actual frequency of watering will depend on your soil and climate as well as the age of the plant. Try watering a few mornings a week - water slowly, until the soil is thoroughly soaked 12 to 18 inches deep. Soaker hoses or a hose with a bubbler attachment will help keep water from splashing on to foliage, which can promote disease. Soil-level and drip irrigation systems are also effective. Avoid overhead watering.

## PREVENT PESTS & DISEASES

Early detection and prevention keep disease problems under control. Aphids are mainly a spring pest, and summer pests include thrips and spider mites. Thrips mainly attack the blossoms of a rose (especially those white and yellow in color), and mites attack foliage, turning leaves a mottled brown and leaving their tell-tale fine webbing. If detected early, these pests can be controlled with one or two sprays of an organic or chemical remedy. An initial control for both mites and aphids is a rinse with a jet of water from the garden hose.

The "Big Three" of roses diseases are black spot, powdery mildew and rust, all of which are types of fungus. Black spot occurs during humid or rainy weather or where watering (especially overhead) is excessive. Powdery mildew prefers warm days and cool nights, crowded plantings, and/or damp, shady areas. Rust develops on moist foliage, so areas with heavy dew or fog are prone to this disease. Proper rose culture, including plenty of sun, sufficient air circulation, proper watering and sanitation (disposing of old leaves and other debris) will minimize all three disease problems. If detected early and treated with a fungicide, none of these will spread out of control.

## PRUNE TO PROMOTE BLOOMS

Pruning controls, the size and shape of rose plants, and for modern varieties, keeps them blooming repeatedly all season long. Well-established hybrid teas, floribundas and grandifloras should be pruned January to mid-February. Old-fashioned roses and climbers that only bloom once a year (e.g. 'Cecile Brunner', 'Lady Banks') should be pruned immediately after flowering since they bloom on wood from the previous year's growth. Generous proper pruning creates bigger plants and eventually more flowers per plant. Don't be nervous about pruning - we've seen no evidence that anyone ever killed a rose with pruning shears!

