



by Carol Seminara, HCMG

Recipe for Roses

The HCMGs were well represented at this year's Lavender Festival held at Becker Vineyards near Fredericksburg. Former HCMG Harold Pieratt spoke on "Garden Roses for the Texas Hill Country" and Beverly Weidenfeller presented a lecture on "Vermiculture."

Roses

Along with basic information on rose cultivation, Harold explained a bit about the history of old-growth roses and their resurgence in popularity due, in part, to the efforts of the so-called rose rustlers, rose enthusiasts who seek out and propagate antique rose varieties which would otherwise be lost. Rose rustlers are credited with locating many heritage Texas roses such as "Pam's Pink" and the "Katy Road" rose.

Harold recommends these old garden roses for their hardiness even in poor soil and climate conditions and because of their inherent disease resistance. Of course, Harold believes in mulching as one of the primary keys to garden success with his roses. An organic gardener, he generously shared a few of his "recipes" with the group and granted me permission to publish them here.

Following are two of Harold's formulas, one is a foliar feed for roses and the other is his recommended flower bed mixture. Thanks, Harold, for sharing!

Rose Recipe

Combine:

- 2 oz. apple cider vinegar; 1 oz. liquid seaweed;
- 1 oz. garden molasses; 1 capful of Ironite Liquid PlantFood
- 1 capful of Superthrive; 1 tsp. Miller's Ferri-Plus; 1 tsp. Epsom salts

Add enough lukewarm water to fill 2-gallon sprayer. Mix well. Use to foliar feed roses once a week during their growing season. (Makes enough for a 2-gallon sprayer.)

Yum-Yum Mixture for Flower Beds

In a wheelbarrow, mix:

- 1/2 bag of double-shredded cedar mulch
- 1 20-qt. bag of Dillo Dirt or other biosolids compost (NPK 8-2-4)
- 1 qt. garden molasses (NPK 1-0-3 plus trace minerals)
- 1 qt. green sand, or equivalent (NPK 0-1-5 plus trace minerals)
- 3 or 4 oz. humic acid (a concentrated compost that microbes love), optional

Mix well and apply approximately two inches of depth to rose beds two or three times a year. Employ a no-till method to increase physical condition of soil. Yum-Yum will decompose to approximately one-third its bulk in 4 to 6 months.