



# ROSE FERTILIZATION & INDIA ROSE FERTILIZING

IN SOUTH FLORIDA

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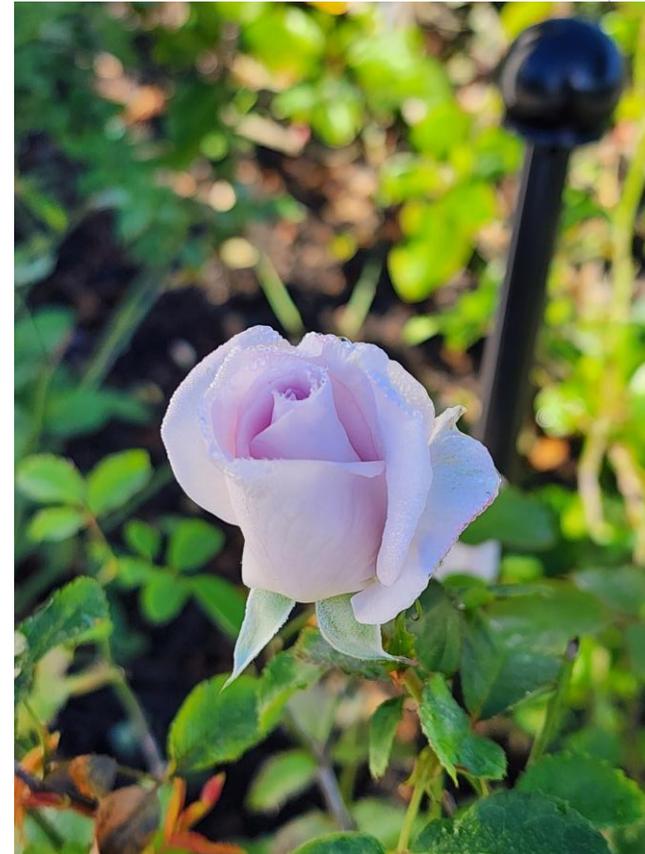
February 2025

# OVERVIEW OF FERTILIZING ROSES

- ▶ 1. DIFFERENT ROSES MAY HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS
- ▶ 2. TESTING SOIL
- ▶ 3. TESTING PH
- ▶ 4. ANALYZING DEFICIENCIES
- ▶ 5. EASY FERTILIZING PLAN
- ▶ 6. MORE COMPLEX FERTILIZING PLAN
- ▶ 7. INDIA'S FERTILIZING METHODS

# HYBRID TEAS

- ▶ **Hybrid Teas:** They are a fussy bunch. You will be doing a little extra fertilizing to keep them healthy looking. Left and Center: 'Tiffany' Right: 'Lagerfeld'.



# OLD GARDEN ROSES



- ▶ **Old Garden Roses:** Old roses, such as Teas, Portlands (Damask Perpetuals) (these need afternoon shade), Bourbons, Noisettes, Hybrid Perpetuals, Bermuda roses, and china roses are literally carefree. Most do not need any extra fertilizing other than a few times per year. And if you skip it, the rose probably won't suffer.
  
- ▶ Left: Mrs. BR Cant

# POLYANTHAS

- ▶ **Polyanthas:** They need very little extra care. Although they may be a little fussier than the old garden roses.
- ▶ Right: Clotilde Soupert



# FLORIBUNDAS & GRANDIFLORAS

- ▶ **Floribundas & Grandifloras:** Most do well in South Florida with little extra care but they do need to be added to your regular routine.
- ▶ Floribunda example is Easy Does It. (top right)
- ▶ Grandiflora example is Mother of Pearl (bottom left)



# ENGLISH ROSES

- ▶ English Roses/Shrub Roses: My favorite of all roses. The English roses are a little more high maintenance and require more frequent fertilizing

**BUT THEY ARE WORTH THE EFFORT!**

- ▶ Right: Eglantyne



# David Austin Roses



Pat Austin



Evelyn

# David Austin Roses

Bottom: Alnwick

Right: Charlotte



# EARTHKIND

- ▶ **Earthkind:** These were developed by Texas A&M University and do very well in South Florida with little to no care. Belinda's Dream and Belinda's Blush are examples.



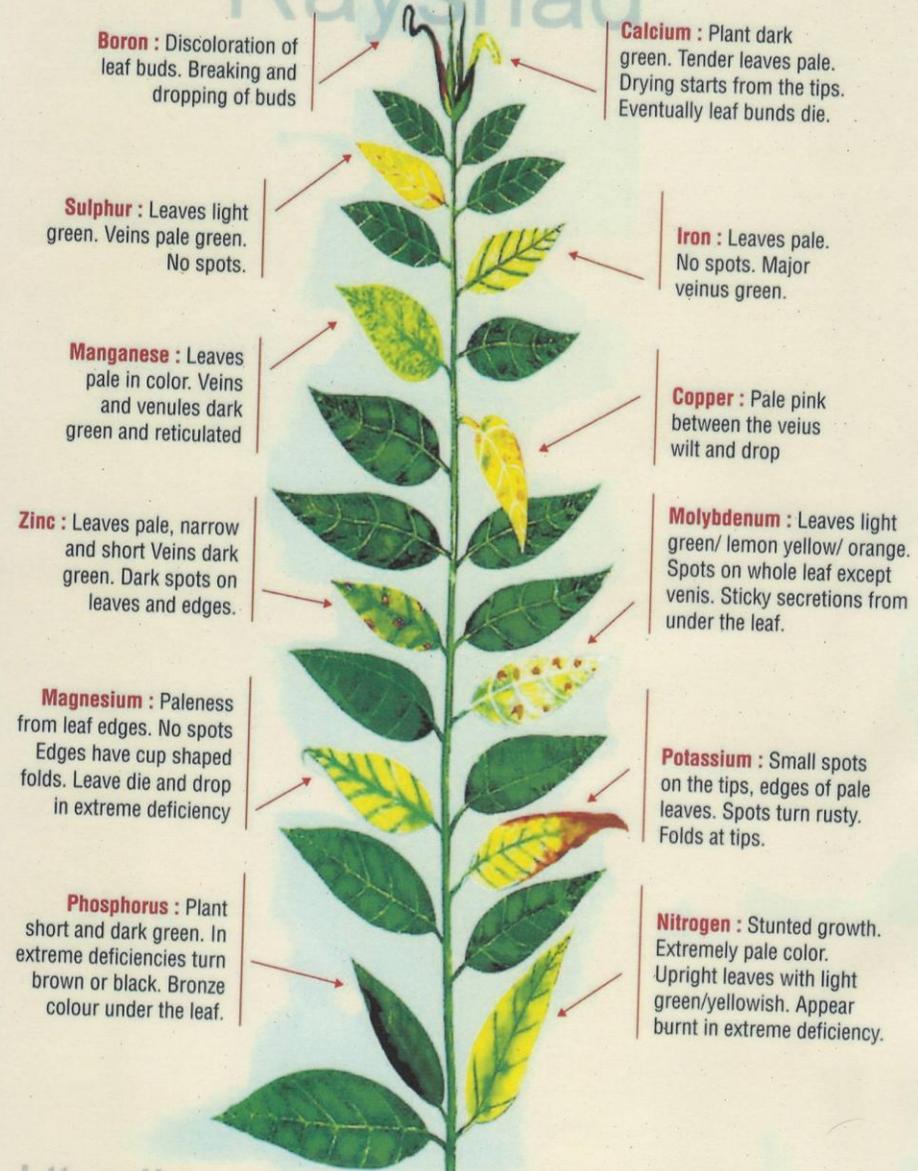
# SOIL

- ▶ **TEST YOUR SOIL!** You can send soil to your local extension for testing for a small fee or use a Kit which is not as accurate but good enough for the home rose gardener. Most of these will test your major elements such as Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potassium,
- ▶ **NITROGEN (N):** We have low Nitrogen in our soil. Part of this is from the heavy rains and sandy soil which contribute to Nitrogen washing out from the soil. Add a fertilizer with a high first number.
- ▶ **PHOSPHOROUS (P):** We have high Phosphorous in South Florida so you should always fertilize accordingly. Choose a fertilizer with a lower middle number (P)
- ▶ **POTASSIUM (K):** We have low potassium in our soil. Adding banana water, Potassium Sulphate or a fertilizer with a higher last number will rectify this.
- ▶ **PH:** Roses like a PH of 5.5 to 6.5. My preference is 6.0. If the PH is too high, nutrients cannot be up taken to the canes. Use your PH tester on a regular basis! To lower PH use potassium sulphate, elemental sulphur. Sometimes rainwater will lower it as well. To raise PH (which is almost never necessary in South Florida) use baking soda, volcanic ash.
- ▶ **RIGHT:** Example of High PH which inhibits nutrient uptake. This bush has chlorosis.



# DEFICIENCY CHART OF MICRONUTRIANTS

## Rayshad



# PH/WATER METER

- ▶ Use a meter to test your PH.
- ▶ If your PH is over 6.5, you will need to reduce the PH in order the rose to uptake the nutrients. **Optimal is 5.5 to 6.5.**
- ▶ **Ways to reduce the PH:**

1 teaspoon of **Elemental Sulphur** around base of bush and water in

1 teaspoon of **Potassium Sulphate** around base of bush and water in

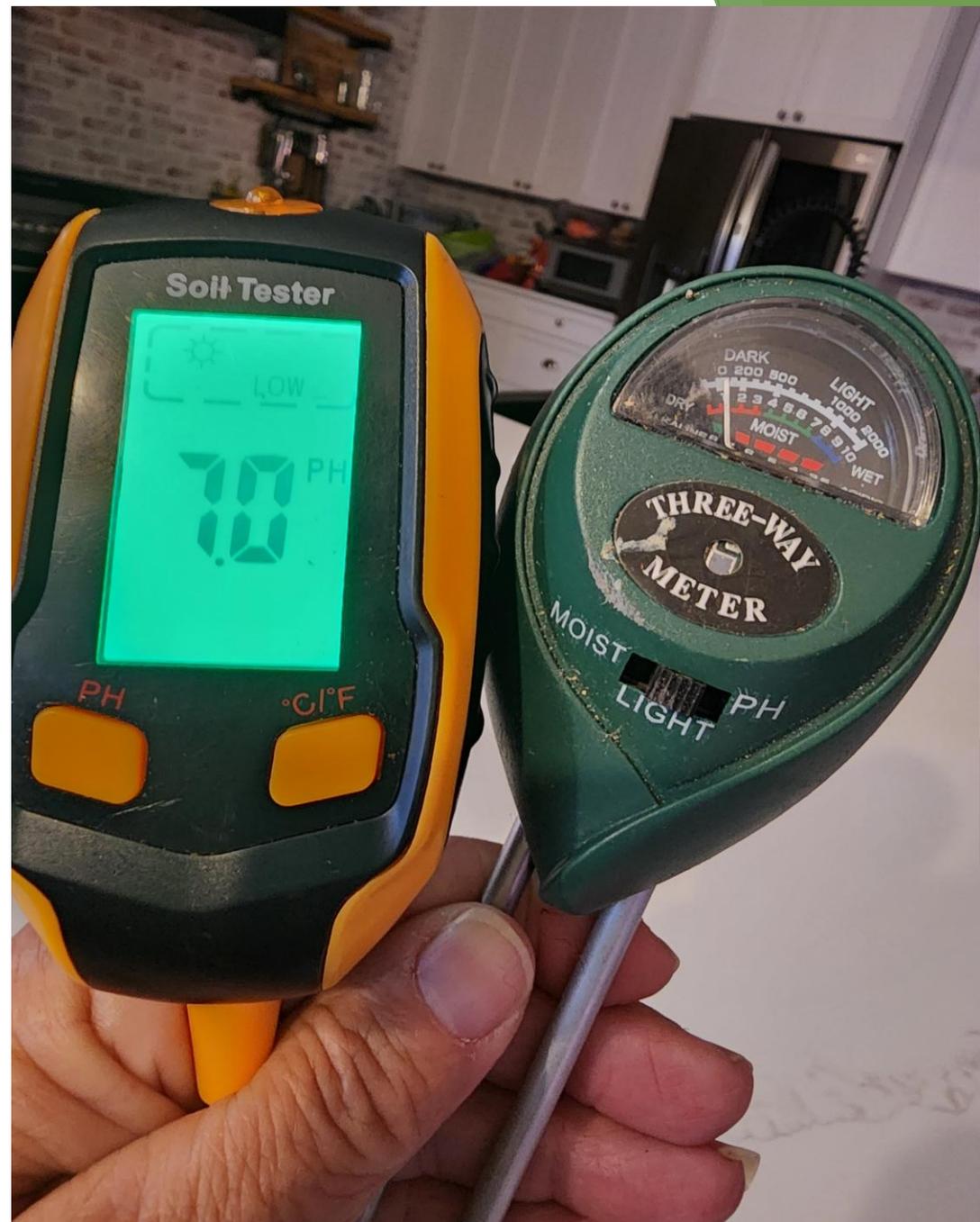
**Fertilome Acidifier with Iron or Blueberry Fertilizer:** 1 teaspoon per quart of water and use 1 cup on small bush and 2 cups on larger bush around drip line

**Pine needles or Pine Bark Mulch:** A good mulch for acid-loving plants

**Oak leaves:** An acidic mulch that can help make soil more acidic

**Cypress:** A lightweight mulch that can deter insects and fungi

**Wood chips:** Can significantly decrease the pH of fine sandy loam soil





## EASY METHOD

February through April and again August through November. (You may have to supplement in summer months with a liquid fish fertilizer due to rainy season)

**Granular fertilizer with minor elements** broadcast evenly every two to 4 weeks around the bush out to the drip line

1/3 cup for smaller bushes; 1/2 cup for larger bushes; 1/4 cup for miniatures or minifloras.

Water well before and after

Examples are Sunniland Rose Growers Specials 16-5-10 or Osmocote Professional with Minors 15-9-12

# My Method

- ▶ **February:** After pruning, use a long term fertilizer like Osmocote Plus Minors 8 - 9 month granular. Also, use alfalfa pellets. One to two cups per plant and water in. Horse or Cow Manure and Compost
- ▶ **March - June and October – November:** Rotate weekly:

Max Sea 16 16 16.

Fish Emulsion

Great Big Roses

Potassium Sulphate

Alfalfa Tea

I add Epsom salts when I need greening or I see the leaves are lacking Magnesium

I use Banana water 15 days before I want a big flush of roses for an event or party.

In the Summer months, keep as many leaves on the bush as possible and do not give nitrogen unless you see it is deficient so the bush can weather the hot weather. Blooms will be faded and smaller. This is normal. Feed with potassium and phosphate rich fertilizers like Milorganite and K-mag or Potassium Sulphate. The goal is to keep lots of mature green leaves on your plants. They help cool your roses in the brutal heat of the summer as well as help remove the extra water in the soil from the heavy summer rains. Leaves also produce energy through photosynthesis which is used for flowers in the winter months but is stored in the plants stems in the summer. When we cut roses in the summer, that energy is wasted on spindly stems and inferior blooms and causes stress to the plants. The tender new growth that results from cutting attracts every insect in the state to your rose garden.

- ▶ **October - November:** This is the time to put down horse manure or other composts.

# RECIPES

## ▶ Alfalfa Tea

I add everything but the kitchen sink to this:

Alfalfa (organic no salt) 2 cups

Bat Guano (1 teaspoon)

Great Big Roses (4 tablespoons)

Epsom Salt (2 cups)

Fish Emulsion (4 tablespoons)

Kelp (2 tablespoons)

Potassium sulphate (2 tablespoons)

Put all into a Lowes 4 gallon pail filled with water and store 24 hours in the sun.

Sometimes I spray this and sometimes I use as a drench. You can also add fungicide or pesticides to this as well but then eliminate the potassium sulphate.

## ▶ Banana Water

Method One:

Two banana peels in a 4 gallon Lowes pail filled with water and seeped 24 hours in the sun.

One Quart per bush (or you can spray this as well)

Method Two:

Two overripe bananas mashed up in a 4 gallon Lowes pail filled with water. You can use this immediately.

One Quart per bush (you cannot spray this)

# INDIA FERTILIZING METHOD

- ▶ Once per month the following ingredients are added to the soil. The method to do this is to dig around the edge of the pot as deeply as you can go and remove the soil. Add the ingredients to the trench you have dug and cover with new fresh soil/compost mix. Water in well with the mix below.
- ▶ This once-a-month process involves three parts:
  - ▶ 1) Dry ingredients that are added directly into the rose's pot.
  - ▶ 2) Liquid ingredients that are used to water-in the dry ingredients.
  - ▶ 3) A foliar spray after the first two steps are complete.
- ▶ Many of these ingredients are available on Amazon, or check your local garden center. In instances where a certain ingredient may not be available, I have equivalent substitutes listed.

## Dry Ingredients:

**2 tbsp Mustard Cake Powder** (alternate: Bloodmeal or Fish Emulsion). Mustard Cake Powder contains nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, sulfur, magnesium, manganese, zinc and other organic matter. You can get this on Amazon.

**3 tbsp Bone Meal** (alternate: Rock Phosphate): Contains Phosphorous, Calcium and Organic matter in a slow release form.

**2 tbsp Neem Cake Powder:** This improves soil structure, reduces alkalinity, develops roots, repels pests, fungi and controls nematodes. It is also known to increase crop yields. It contains organic matter, nitrogen, phosphorous, sulfur and calcium. It also promotes nitrification which prolongs the availability of nitrogen. You can get this on Amazon.

**2 tsp Epsom Salt:** This will improve nutrient absorption. It contains magnesium and sulfate, which are essential nutrients for plants: Magnesium allows plants to absorb phosphorus and nitrogen, strengthens cell walls, and increases chlorophyll production for nice dark green leaves. The sulfate helps produce chlorophyll and makes nutrients more effective for plants. Epsom salt can help roses grow bushier, produce more flowers, and have more vibrant colors. Epsom salt can help prevent root shock, which can cause plants to wilt or have yellowing leaves.

**1 tsp Trichoz-P (Trichoderma Viride):** This is an organic method to prevent blackspot and dieback and to strengthen roots. Research shows you can use Alfalfa pellets, Kelp Meal or Cornmeal in its place. Alfalfa pellets and kelp meal contain Triacantanol which is a growth regulator/stimulant.

## Watered In Ingredients:

### In 1 Gallon of Water mix:

**4 tsp SuperSonata** (alternate is Superthrive, however use 1/4 teaspoon per gallon): Super Sonata is a plant growth regulator that can help improve the overall health. It can increase vigor, enhance tolerance to adverse factors, and improve the quality the rose. It also prevents transplant shock. SuperSonata contains: Seaweed extract rich in potassium, magnesium, and other minerals Amino acids and vitamins, live microbes and Humic acid. You probably can't get this in the USA so using Superthrive as the replacement is fine, it won't have the live microbes though.

**1 tsp Takat or Naval Takat** (alternative **Great Big Roses**, however use 4 tablespoons per gallon): This contains amino acids, fulvic acid, humic acids and are seaweed based liquid composts. They improve the uptake of nutrients. You probably cannot get this in the USA so using Great Big Roses is perfectly fine.

**2 tsp Biovita Seaweed Extract:** Biovita is a natural biostimulant that comes from a concentrated extract of the seaweed *Ascophyllum Nodosum*. It contains over 60 organic nutrients, including enzymes, proteins, cytokinins, amino acids, vitamins, gibberellins, auxins, and betaines. Biovita can help plants grow and develop better by providing essential nutrients and growth hormones. Biovita can help plants become more resistant to environmental stresses. It improves the physical, chemical, and biological properties of soil and can increase the soil's aeration and water holding capacity, and make metallic fungicides more effective. Microbial activity in soil is increased, which can make nutrients more available. It can be applied as a foliar spray or soil drench.

## **Spraying Routine:**

Per 1 liter of water:

2 tsp SAAF This is for blackspot and other fungal diseases  
12% carbendazim/63% Moncozeb. Manzate ProStick is a US Alternative  
1/4 tsp Theeta Bio Organic Pest (1% Azadirachtin) In the USA these  
contain Azadiractin: TreeAzin, AzaMax, BioNEEM, AzaGuard, and  
AzaSol, Terramera Proof and Terramera Cirkil.

## **Water:**

These small pots are watered daily in cool weather and multiple times a day in hot weather. I am including some pictures of roses in India in these little pots.

## INDIA METHOD IN A NUTSHELL

So, the takeaway is that they basically keep the soil healthy with organic matter and refresh monthly. It is basically “living soil.”

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