

# Fall Rose Prep

*The following is the text from*

Simone Rodgers with Flourish Roses | The Boutique Store for Roses!

Mesa Arizona - [www.flourishroses.com](http://www.flourishroses.com)

Fall 2022

The beginning of Fall in warm zones is when we are consistently under 100 degrees. In cold zones, use this checklist for Spring Prep. This is a time to venture back outside without worrying that we are going to melt :)

With Fall in full swing and temperatures in the low 80-70's, it's time to prep our roses for big beautiful blooms!

## **Garden Clean Up**

First things first, we must clean up the garden! The rain we got this year was wonderful, but with rain + heat comes weeds! They are the thorn in my side. Pull any weeds, rake up any fallen leaves and pull your summer annuals. Now is a good time to plant your cool season annuals such as pansies, snapdragons, and alyssum.

## **Trim Your Roses**

This is not the time to hard prune your roses. This is a light trim that consists of deadheading, removing any dead canes, and size-controlling your bush. Rain + heat in warm zones creates massive bushes. Take down your bush about 1/3 down. In the winter, you can take it down about 1/2 and reshape it if necessary.

## **Add Fresh Compost**

Add compost around the bases of in-ground roses. I like to use homemade compost and will add a nice thick layer at the base mixed with my amendments. If you don't make your own compost, you can buy some from [The Arizona Worm Farm | Red Wiggler Worm + Compost + Worm Castings](#) or buy some locally in your area.

For container-grown roses, add more potting soil. I like [Happy Frog® Potting Soil - FoxFarm Soil & Fertilizer Company](#) because it provides a lot of good organic ingredients. The top of the soil should be approximately 2 inches from the top of the container. Water well to let the soil settle.

## **Add Amendments**

Your roses will want to be fed after a dormant summer. There are a few important fertilizers to purchase for fall applications. Compost, worm castings, alfalfa meal, manure, and your choice of bloom fertilizer. I like the [Rose & Flower Mix 4-8-4 – Down To Earth Fertilizer](#). I mix my compost with the Down to Earth, manure, and worm castings. Spread a generous layer in the rose bed. I also like using liquid fish fertilizers such as [Neptunes Harvest](#). I use it as a soil drench at the base of each rose bush to give it instant nutrition as you wait for the compost to break down and feed your rose or use it as a foliar spray. I also like to take alfalfa pellets and soak them in water for a few days so it can break down and dissolve. Then I pour that at the base of each rose. Or you could add a cup of alfalfa pellets at the base of each rose right before it rains and let the rain do the work for you. Lastly, I like to give my roses a nice foliar spray of worm tea. [Mobile Tea Sprays \(arizonawormfarm.com\)](#)

Alfalfa Meal or Pellets: “Why is alfalfa good for roses? As a fertilizer, alfalfa is 5-1-2, providing a good source of nitrogen, calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, zinc, vitamins (A, D, B1, B6, E, K and U) and triacontol, which is a fatty acid growth stimulant. Because of these beneficial components, alfalfa can provide roses many of the substances that they need to grow as well as stimulating growth”. [The Value of Alfalfa \(rose.org\)](#)

Worm Castings: “Worm castings are a gentle, effective, natural fertilizer that provides essential nutrients to plants. Scientific studies, [Vermicompost significantly affects plant growth. A meta-analysis | SpringerLink](#), show that using worm castings in the garden can help plants grow significantly larger, stronger, and produce more

abundant and better-quality flowers, fruit, and vegetables. It can also increase a plant's resilience to pests, drought, heat, disease, and other stress".

## [Worm Castings 101: Benefits to Plants and Soil ~ Homestead and Chill](#)

Worm Tea: "Plants don't just take up nutrients through their roots. They can also absorb nutrients, [Plant-Soil Interactions: Nutrient Uptake | Learn Science at Scitable \(nature.com\)](#), effectively through their tissues as well (such as leaves and stems). Providing a feeding sprayed directly onto the plant tissue is a fast way to ensure that plants are getting the nutrients that they need". [Our Top 3 Reasons to Foliar-Feed with Compost Tea — Berkshire Worms](#)

## [Worm Casting Tea: Full Guide To Benefits, Making & Using - WhyFarmIt.com](#)

Steer Manure: Some people like to add aged manure (aged at least 3 months). I would mix that in well with compost. A mix of 25% manure and 75% compost is a good ratio.

"The effects of manure on the soil are beneficial as well. As the soil absorbs manure, nutrients are released. This enriches the soil, which in turn helps the plants. The most important benefit of using manure in the garden is its ability to condition the soil. For instance, mixing manure with sandy soils helps to retain moisture levels. Adding manure to compacted soil helps loosen the soil. Manure produces increased soil carbon, which is an important source of energy that makes nutrients available to plants. Other benefits of manure include reduced runoff and leaching of nitrates in the soil".

[Manure As Fertilizer: How Manure Effects The Soil \(gardeningknowhow.com\)](#)

### **Beneficial Insects**

In an organic garden, beneficial insects are your best friend! Using insects as a form of natural pest control has become more prevalent for organic gardeners. Biological pest control, or integrated pest management (IPM), uses various insects to control pests. Beneficial insects should also be released when food sources are plentiful, allowing the insects to survive for longer periods. Beneficial insects must be released when the temperatures range from 76 to 32 degrees. Here are the ones I use.

[Beneficial Insects for Biological Pest Control | ARBICO Organics \(arbico-organics.com\)](#)

### **Beneficial Nematodes**

"Beneficial nematodes as pest control will attack soil-borne insect pests with no harmful effects on earthworms, plants, animals, or humans, making it an environmentally friendly solution"

[Beneficial Nematodes For Gardening - How Do Beneficial Nematodes Work \(gardeningknowhow.com\)](#)

I purchase my beneficial nematodes from Arbico Organics.

[NemAttack Beneficial Nematodes S. Feltiae - Fungus Gnat Control \(arbico-organics.com\)](#)

### **Beneficial Insects**

Amblyseius Cucumeris: predatory mites are primarily thrips predators, but will also feed on a range of mite species in different environments.

Ladybugs: are predators of aphids, which are small, sap-sucking insects that can damage plants and leaves. If you're having trouble with aphids, distribute ladybugs to control the aphid population.

[Ladybugs For Integrated Pest Management \(arbico-organics.com\)](#)

Green Lacewings: Green lacewing eggs provide the best value among the beneficial insects. Once hatched, the larvae are voracious predators used to control a wide range of soft-bodied pest insects. Green lacewing is ideal for building a sustainable population within your growing area for continued control.

[Green Lacewing \(Chrysoperla rufilabris\) | Biological Pest Control \(arbico-organics.com\)](#)

Praying Mantises: They are generalist predators with a broad-ranging appetite consisting of various insects and the occasional small animal.

[Praying Mantid Egg Cases | General Pest Control \(arbico-organics.com\)](#)

Minute Pirate Bugs: They particularly love to eat thrips and are known to attack adult thrips.

[Minute Pirate Bug \(Orius insidiosus\) Beneficial Predator \(arbico-organics.com\)](#)

### **Check Drip Irrigation**

Water for your roses is very important in the desert. We don't get enough rain here to rely on Mother Nature. If we do get a nice desert rain your roses will love it, but we still need to supplement with water. Drip irrigation is a good way to water your roses without wasting water. After a long summer, check all of your drip irrigation. In the desert, we get hard water that clogs tubes/emitters and should be replaced. Run your system and be sure to check for broken tubing or clogged emitters.

Xoxo,  
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