

Low Maintenance Roses

Americans have been in love with roses for hundreds of years. This woody flowering shrub (genus *Rosa*) has become our national flower, the rose. Presidential, as well as local, "rose gardens," rose societies, rose enthusiasts and horticulturists have promoted the rose for beauty and fragrance for centuries. When deciding to purchase and grow roses, research disease-resistant and low-maintenance roses, consult with reputable nurseries and garden centers, and read the labels on plants about their care, growing conditions and mature size.

Roses may be grown as borders and hedges or incorporated with other flowers in the home garden. Select dormant plants with thick canes and no blemishes. Plant in a location with at least six hours of sun and loamy, well-drained soil with a pH between 6.0 and 6.5. Fertilize occasionally with a rose fertilizer once plants are established. Do not fertilize after August. Plant roses 12-18 inches deep and apply 2-3 inches of mulch to conserve moisture. Prune in late winter or early spring. Remove dead, damaged or diseased growths as soon as possible. Removing some of the older growth creates air space for the plant to thrive. Roses need about 1 inch of water per week. Water rose bushes at the base of the bush and not on the leaves; wet foliage promotes the occurrence of fungal diseases such as black spot and powdery mildew. For more information see Rutgers Fact Sheets FS944 "Roses and Their Care" and FS1158 "Black Spot of Rose."

Disease resistant and low-maintenance shrub roses that grow well in Ocean County are described below. Easy Elegance Series Yellow Brick Road Rose is known for its easy care qualities which include resistance to black spot. This compact shrub (2-3 feet high and wide) has fragrant lemon yellow flowers. Drift Roses have tiny flowers in a variety of colors (red, pink, apricot and white) and flower forms (double and semi-double). Plants grow 1.5 feet tall by 2-3 feet wide and have improved disease resistance. They work well as groundcovers due to their spreading, mounded growth habit. Meidiland landscape and groundcover roses are also popular. They are vigorous plants with excellent disease resistance. White Meidiland is a groundcover with double white flowers that grows 2 feet high and 5-6 feet wide. Pink Meidiland grows to about 4 feet and has single pink flowers with white centers.

Checklist for September

Flower and Vegetable Garden

- ✓ Dig up and cure tender summer bulbs when foliage turns brown. Store in a cool, dry place.
- ✓ Plant winter pansies and fall annuals, i.e., ornamental cabbage and kale.
- ✓ Collect seeds from perennials and annuals. Store in a cool, dry place.
- ✓ Buy and plant spring flowering bulbs, such as daffodils and tulips. Rutgers [FS1220](#), "Spring Flowering Bulbs."
- ✓ Harvest herbs and flowers for drying. [Factsheet](#)

Indoor Plants

- ✓ Ensure houseplants are pest-free before taking them indoors. [Factsheet](#)
- ✓ Check to see if your houseplants are root bound. If so, remove carefully and repot. [Factsheet](#)

Lawn

- ✓ Continue to mow and fertilize lawn, as needed. This is the best time to fertilize and seed your lawn or dethatch and aerate, if needed.
- ✓ Check Ocean County Hazardous Waste schedule at 1-800-55RECYCLE or (732) 506-5047 or visit the website www.co.ocean.nj.us/oc/SolidWaste/ for information on disposal of pesticides and other hazardous waste.

