# From The Ground Up

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## Winter Care for Roses

#### By: Margaret Murphy, Master Gardener

In our region, winter protection is important for many roses especially the modern, bush-type varieties such as hybrid teas, floribundas, and grandifloras. Exposure to winter winds, and fluctuating temperatures that cause repeated freezing and thawing of the soil can severely injure or kill unprotected roses. Taking a few protective steps this fall, could help prevent the loss of your valued plants.

Winter rose care begins after roses go dormant. This usually occurs in late October to early November. To start clean up fallen leaves and debris from around the base of the plant. This will help reduce potential problems next season as many diseases and insects can overwinter on leaf litter. To protect bush-type roses, first take some twine and tie the canes together to keep them from being battered about by the wind. Then mound about ten to twelve inches of soil around the base of the plant. Do not remove soil from the rose's root zone but use soil from another location. Straw or chopped leaves can be placed on top of the mound for added insulation. To hold the insulating mulch in place, you can cover it with a small amount of soil or lay evergreen boughs on top. Some gardeners prefer putting a chicken wire fence around the plant to hold the mulch.

For gardeners who like to use a rose cone, you may need to prune back the canes in order for the plant to fit beneath it. Another option is to use a bushel basket with the bottom cut away. Covering the rose plant with a cone or basket, however, does not eliminate the need for the protective layer of soil. So before covering the plant, be sure to add several inches of soil around the base of the canes. If the cover lacks proper ventilation, punch several one inch holes around the top to prevent the buildup of heat and moisture.



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To winterize climbing roses, the entire plant can be covered in soil. Begin by removing the rose from its climbing structure and very carefully bend the canes to the ground. Secure the canes in place with wire or stakes and then cover with about four inches of soil. If taking the plant off its structure is not possible, you can try gathering the tips of the stems and tying them together. Then wrap in straw and cover with burlap to hold the straw in place. This will not protect the climbing rose as well as covering the entire plant with soil, particularly in our cold climate. So use this technique only if covering the whole plant is definitely not an option.

Uncover your roses in the spring after the threat of a hard frost is passed. This can sometimes be tricky to determine given our unpredictable weather in the spring. But the protective materials should be removed before new growth begins.

Roses have the best chance of surviving our very cold winters if they are in a healthy state prior to going dormant. Here are a few tips to help keep up their vigor towards season's end. Keep roses adequately watered up until they go dormant. Stop fertilizing after July to avoid



Rose hips, www.extension.umn.edu

encouraging new, late season growth. This new growth may not become well enough established to make it through the winter. Also, in late summer, discontinue deadheading roses. This allows rose hips to develop, which promotes the plant's preparation or "hardening off" for winter.

If you are uncertain as to whether or not your rose should be winterized, go ahead and protect it. If done right, it won't hurt the plant.

# In the News

#### From U.S. Environmental Protection Agency press release, August 15, 2013:

In an ongoing effort to protect bees and other pollinators, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed new pesticide labels that prohibit use of some neonicotinoid pesticide products where bees are present. The new labels will have a bee advisory box and icon



Bee hazard icon that will accompany EPA pesticide label directions to protect pollinators.

with information on routes of exposure and spray drift precautions. This announcement affects products containing the neonicotinoids imidacloprid, dinotefuran, clothianidin and thiamethoxam. The EPA will work with pesticide manufacturers to change labels so that they will meet the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide

Act (FIFRA) safety standard. Read more on the EPA's label changes and pollinator protection efforts on their <u>website</u>.

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 <u>Dig dahlias</u> <u>&amp; cannas after</u> <u>a killing frost</u>
6	7	8	9 <u>Remove</u> <u>pumps from wa-</u> <u>ter features to</u> <u>prevent freezing</u>	10	11 <u>Pot ama-</u> ryllis bulbs for forcing	12
<b>13</b> Visit a park or arboretum for fall color	14 Columbus Day	15	16	<b>17</b> <u>Plant gar-</u> <u>lic in sunny,</u> <u>well-drained</u> <u>site</u>	18	19
20	21 <u>Plant spring-</u> <u>flowering bulbs</u>	22	23 <u>Continue to</u> <u>mow lawn until</u> <u>grass stops</u> <u>growing</u>	24	25 <u>Leave asparagus foliage</u> standing through winter	26
27	28	<b>29</b> <u>Save</u> <u>pumpkin</u> <u>seeds to roast</u>	30	31 Halloween		

## The South Dakota Herb Garden

**Bv:** Priscilla Jurkovich, Master Gardener



Photo by Priscilla Jurkovich

Borage, Borago officinalis, is from the boraginaceae family. This hardy, faithful annual comes back yearly by re-seeding itself and can grow up to 3 feet. It's commonly called the starflower since it has edible, periwinkle-blue blooms with 5 narrow triangular petals and a white ring in the center. Some cultivars are pink or a rare white flower. These flowers can bloom from June until fall frost. The leaves are coarsely hairy and can irritate sensitive skin.

Borage loves a sunny, well-drained area and thrives on composted soil. It is generally pest and disease free. The flowers attract butterflies and bees. This easy to grow plant is

drought tolerant and deters deer. Borage is a great companion plant that deters tomato hornworms and Japanese beetles but also stimulates growth in strawberries.

The leaves have a cucumber-like taste and can be used as a poultice or eaten. As a

poultice, it is used for sprains, bruises and inflammation. The leaves have been used for dry, itchy skin conditions such as eczema and psoriasis. The seed oil is cultivated for its gamma-linolenic acid (GLA), which is a rich source of omega 6 fatty acid. The flowers have been used as cake decorations, put in ice cubes to decorate a punch bowl or in salads. Some cultures use the leaves in soup, sautéed with garlic as a side dish or as a filling for ravioli. It has digestive, cardiovascular and respiratory benefits.



Photo by Priscilla Jurkovich

## **Growing Garlic** By: Margaret Murphy, Master Gardener

Garlic has been cultivated for thousands of years and is a culinary staple in many cultures. It is a member of the onion family, which includes other tasty members such as leeks, chives and shallots.

Each bulb of garlic contains many smaller bulbs called cloves that are encased in a fine, papery covering. Garlic cultivars are broadly classified as either hardneck or softneck. Simply stated, hardneck varieties produce a flower stalk while softneck types do not. The hardneck varieties, also referred to as "top-setting" or "bolting", are the easiest to grow. They handle our cooler weather better than most softnecks. Softneck garlic, also known as the "artichoke" cultivars, are commonly grown in California for commercial production though there are a few softneck varieties suitable for growing in our cold climate.

Garlic is propagated by planting the cloves. Avoid planting cloves that you buy in the produce section of the grocery store as they may have been treated to prevent sprouting. This makes them keep longer in your kitchen but can limit the number of cloves that will develop after planting.

The best time to plant garlic in our region is in the fall (October to early November). Garlic bulbs need a cold period in order for the cloves to develop properly. Fall planted cloves will root and grow until the first hard freeze then resume growth again in the spring.

When planting garlic, place it in an area that will receive plenty of sun. Make sure it is in soil with good drainage. Soggy soils will cause the cloves to rot. Before planting, gently separate the individual garlic cloves. The largest cloves will be the most productive. Plant the cloves about one inch deep with the pointed side facing up. Cloves should be placed three to five inches apart in the row with rows spaced at about 18 to 24 inches apart. When finished planting, put down several inches of an organic mulch such as straw to insulate the cloves over winter. Remember to promptly remove the mulch in early spring after the threat

of a hard freeze is over.

Garlic is considered a "heavy feeder" so before planting, work into the soil some all purpose garden fertilizer. In the spring, apply an additional

## **Insects**

Now is the time to be watching for the brown marmorated stink bugs

(BMSB) to be resting on the south side of the house or entering to spend the winter. Please let us know if you spot anything similar to the photo. Read more about <u>BMSB</u>.

Black swallowtail caterpillars have been observed on fennel, parsley, and other members of the carrot family. These beautiful caterpillars are almost done



feeding and will soon be making chrysali. They will spend the winter as chrysalis and adult butterflies will emerge in the spring.

Source: Iowa State University Extension and Outreach application of fertilizer about 3 to 4 weeks after you see the first shoots emerge. This time side-dress the plants by lightly sprinkling the fertilizer along each side of the row about 3 to 4 inches away from the shoots. Do not apply nitrogen after the first week of May as this may delay bulbing.

For hardneck cultivars, flower shoots (called scapes) begin to form in midsummer. The scapes should be removed when they begin to curl. This encourages the plant to focus its energy on bulb development rather than flower development. If not



removed, the bulb production can be reduced. Young, tender scapes are considered a delicacy by many and can be chopped up and put in salads or other dishes to add a mild, garlicky flavor.

Garlic has a relatively shallow root system. It does not compete well with weeds so make sure your garlic bed stays well weeded. Also garlic should receive about one inch of water per week during dry periods. Stop irrigating in late July. This allows the foliage to die back prior to harvest. Garlic is ready to harvest when the foliage begins to dry. In our area, that is usually in August or September. To harvest, carefully dig up the bulbs with a shovel or garden fork. Dry the garlic in a warm, location with good air circulation. Lay them on a screened surface or on a slotted tray. When the tops are dried, cut the foliage back to about one inch above the bulb. Also trim off the roots and remove any remaining soil. Store bulbs in an open crate or mesh bag in a cool, dry place. The temperature should be between 32-40 degrees F. Properly dried and stored hardneck varieties can be stored for up to three months. Softneck garlic has a longer shelf life and can usually be stored up to eight months without much deterioration.

#### Save the Date

- October 14th: Minnehaha Master Gardener monthly meeting Monday at 7 p.m.
- June 25-28, 2014: *Growing Along the River*, 2014 Upper Midwest Regional Master Gardener Conference
- September 22-25, 2015: *Horticultural Horizons in the Heartland,* the International Master Gardener Conference. Watch for updates on the conference <u>website</u>, and sign up to "Like" the conference on <u>Facebook</u>.

#### Master Gardener Notes

As the year is winding down, remember to submit your hours! Send completed <u>forms</u> to Mary Roduner by mail or FAX.

This is the last *From the Ground Up* newsletter for the 2013 season. Thank you to all the supporters, contributors and readers of the newsletter!! Enjoy the gardening offseason.

For more information on the Master Gardener program, call the Master Gardener office at 605-782-3290 or send an email.

Plus, check out our website!



## Saving Pumpkin Seeds for Next Year's Planting... Or Not?

#### By Ann Larson, Master Gardener Intern

So you found the perfect pumpkin in your patch this year - a perfect jack-o-lantern! You want to save the seeds to plant and enjoy next year. Well, saving pumpkin seeds is easy; however, keep in mind that when storing seeds, it is important to choose seeds that are not from hybrids (crosses in varieties) because the offspring from hybrids may not contain the same genetic make-up as that of the parent plants.

If you decide you want to save the seeds, here are some simple steps to take:

- Remove the pulp and seeds from inside the pumpkin. Place in a colander.
- Remove all the pulp from the mass, and rinse the seeds well in the colander.
- There will be more seeds inside the pumpkin than you will ever want to plant, so when you have a good amount rinsed, look them over and choose the biggest, plumpest ones. Save about 3x the number of plants you will be growing next year.
- Lay out paper towels on a baking sheet.
- Place the rinsed seeds on the dry paper towels, in a single layer, making sure that the seeds are spaced out so that they don't stick to one another. Blot the seeds with another paper towel.
- Remove the seeds from the paper towels, and place back on the baking sheet in a single layer.
- Place in a cool dry spot for a week to 30 days, turning the seeds and inspecting every other day; removing any that get moldy.
- After thoroughly dry, store the seeds in an envelope in a cool and dry location.

What do you do with the rest of the seeds? Roast them for a tasty treat! Here's a simple recipe from the University Of Illinois Extension. You'll need:

- 1 quart water
- 2 Tablespoons salt
- 2 cups pumpkin seeds
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil or melted, unsalted butter

Preheat oven to 250°F, pick through seeds and remove any cut seeds, remove as much of the stringy fibers as possible, bring the water and salt to a boil, add the seeds and boil for 10 minutes, drain, spread on kitchen towel or paper towel and pat dry, place the seeds in a bowl and toss with oil or melted butter, spread evenly on a large cookie sheet or roasting pan, place pan in a preheated oven and roast the seeds for 30 to 40 minutes, stir about every 10 minutes, until crisp and golden brown, cool the seeds, then shell and eat or pack in air-tight containers or zip closure bags and refrigerate until ready to eat. *Yield 2 cups* 

## Starting a Community Garden?

#### By: Chris Zdorovtsov, Community Development Field Specialist, SDSU Extension

Community gardens grow more than vegetables, flowers and herbs. New relationships form, people get physical exercise, and fresh local food can be provided for community members. There are many forms of community gardens. Traditionally, plots are divided and leased to individuals. Other ideas include school or organizational gardens, plots that supply a local food shelf, or plots for demonstrations and classes around horticulture.

#### Benefits of community gardens include:

- **Food Production and Access** allows people without suitable land to grow fresh food. For example people living in apartments or homeowners with shady or small lots.
- Nutrition research indicates that community gardeners eat more fruits and vegetables (Bremer et al, 2003). Currently South Dakotans are not eating enough produce. The Center for Disease control reported that South Dakota adults were last in the nation for vegetable consumption (2009).
- Exercise for gardeners to improve overall physical health.
- Mental Health can improve with access to nature, lower stress, and a sense of wellness and belonging.
- **Community** spirit can be fostered when people from diverse backgrounds interact and share traditions and pride. A garden also becomes an additional asset to the community.

- **Environmental** improvements may be made to land that was unused before or by adding plant material to a lifeless location.
- Education related to gardening, health, food preservation, and marketing can be taught to youth and adults.
- **Income** from produce sold or used to offset grocery bills. The National Gardening Association reports that a well-maintained food garden can yield approximately ½ pound of produce/square foot of garden area over the growing season. A 20 x 30 foot (600 ft<sup>2</sup>) plot can produce an estimated 300 pounds of produce. At inseason market prices of \$2/pound, this produce is worth \$600 with a return of \$530 based on an average investment of \$70.

Is your community interested in starting a garden? SDSU Extension can help! Extension can assist your planning team by providing coaching to teams interested in starting projects. Additionally, a new Workbook, "<u>Diggin' the Dirt, Community Style</u>" is available. This tool helps communities walk through the steps involved in planning out a project. Contact Chris at <u>Christina.Zdorovtsov@sdstate.edu</u> or at 605-

782-3290 for assistance with developing a garden.

"Youth learn more than gardening" - from Diggin' the Dirt Community Style workbook

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Photo: Kelcey Schroder, Sibley, IA