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October, 2021

Hi All,

In this gardener's opinion the summer of 2021 had its own challenges. With hot weather come insects especially destructive to roses and many other plants. My top two to dislike are spider mites and thrips. There is a list of combatants that are effective - both conventional and organic (always read and follow package instructions). As a professional gardener it is an absolute that any product used in a client's yard be approved in advance. All of my clients request organics. A hose end sprayer greatly reduces the amount of time to treat for insects. I can handle my home gardens front, side, and back in about 10 minutes and that includes putting away the hose. My habit is to do a dormant spray after the winter prune and a preemptive spray for insects just as the new growth emerges.

Summer is coming to an end and it's time to take action with your Fall/Spring garden plans. My roses are coming into a beautiful bloom cycle. My wife and I have picked some lovely bouquets for our home and have given away bouquets. Roses roughly have a 45 to 55 day bloom cycle. I want a bloom cycle for Thanksgiving and Chanukah which means some of my roses are pruned by mid October. I'm pruning for a bloom cycle at Christmas and New Years by the end of October. Cooler weather slows the bloom cycle.

In my opinion the San Fernando Valley has 2 seasons and not 4. The seasons are hot and cool punctuated by wind. My vegetable and herb beds are being readied for cool season edibles like the lettuces, pea pods, dill, spinach, chard, etc. These edibles, when planted early in the cool season, tend to produce until the beginning of the hot season. My wife and I had fresh homegrown salads several times a week, delicious additions to our meals.

Water usage is always a concern. My garden is set to be watered 3 times a week for 5 minutes on each station. 1 minute on Program A and a half an hour later 4 minutes on Program B. Mulch is a great method of slowing water evaporation and nourishing the garden as the mulch decomposes. Since mulch decomposes it should be replaced as often as necessary! Everyone has their own preference for depth and I like a layer that's 3 to 5 inches. Never put mulch directly against canes or trunks as this can cause problems. This is a reminder to check and to adjust your sprinkler system. This means checking both the timer and each emitter in the garden. I check sprinkler systems in March, June, September and December. Batteries are changed around New Years.

Otto and Sons in Fillmore throughout October is having a 40 percent off sale on 5 gallon roses and stone fruit trees. I know that Otto's is absolutely the best and most complete nursery for roses and fruit trees. Otto's has about 800 varieties of roses. Otto's is also a fantastic place to visit for a day trip.

Happy Gardening,

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