



Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article

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Why Roses Have a Bad Reputation

by Lydia Holley

Some people believe roses have a reputation of being difficult to grow, or constantly needing to be sprayed with chemicals to keep them from becoming diseased.

This reputation came from the type of rose that was popular in the 1950's and 1960's. Hybrid tea roses, crosses between hybrid perpetual roses and tea roses, were bred during that time for color and form, not for disease resistance. It became common for rose breeders and home gardeners to spray fungicides on roses to keep diseases at bay. Roses soon developed a reputation for being difficult to grow.



This may have been accurate for those particular roses, but you can rejoice because this reputation is inaccurate for many roses, especially for the older and newer varieties. If you object to spraying chemicals, or are just too lazy or too busy to adopt this sort of routine, you can still grow beautiful roses.

There are many antique or older roses that in the past were passed along for generations without being sprayed, and which are naturally disease resistant. It is also now common for newer roses to be bred with disease resistance in mind, not just for a beautiful bloom.

So, a garden full of roses that have beautiful foliage without being sprayed is possible and actually quite easy to achieve if you choose roses that can be grown without being subjected to a weekly routine of fungicide applications. Researching your roses for disease resistance is important.

There are three main rose diseases: rust, blackspot and powdery mildew. You can find roses that are resistant to one or all three of these fungal diseases. Knock Out™ roses are popular due to their disease resistance. When you start researching roses, however, you find that there are many roses that can be easily grown that are disease resistant and have few maintenance requirements.

Pruning may be another reason some people choose not to grow roses. Pruning may seem scary to the novice gardener. Most hybrid teas, bred for their large blooms, like to be hard pruned. Many shrub roses prefer to be lightly pruned. But there are roses you can grow that may never need pruning. If you do not have the time or inclination to prune roses, you can still plant and enjoy roses in your own garden. Again, research for the types of roses that do not require pruning is recommended.

There really is a rose for almost every type of garden. Do not let a bad reputation scare you away from enjoying roses in your own garden. If you are interested in growing low maintenance roses, join us for Mark

Chamblee's presentation "Beautiful Low Maintenance Roses for Your Landscape" on Thursday, June 16, First United Methodist Church, 507 N Broad, Chandler, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Free and open to the public.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email hendersonCMGA@gmail.com or visit www.henderson-co-tx-mg.org.