



# GREEN pages

UTAH

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WINTER 2010

## Easy Care Roses Some Options for Staying Low Maintenance & High Color

Not everyone new to the Desert Southwest is aware that roses do quite well here. Though we do have a harsh climate with winters that freeze and summers that roast, all around the valley you'll find roses that look gorgeous every spring and fall. True; during the summer they will look a bit bedraggled, but just who doesn't feel that way when it's 110° outside. Though I recommend that you find a spot with morning sun, I've seen roses do amazingly well even planted in full afternoon sun.

An issue that is often the case with roses though is that they need special care because they are prone to disease, like mildew and black spot as well as insects. You'll need to give them special pruning and they just seem finicky. Often the case but not always!

Over the past years botanists have hybridized new cultivars that resist mildew, and other fungal diseases. An important introduction was made in 1995 by a hybridizer named Werner Noack. He developed the Flower Carpet Rose. Later his son Richard continued hybridizing these and now we have many varieties to choose from. These are all very low maintenance, disease resistant and drought tolerant.

Take the Carpet Rose for example. These are generally considered Groundcover Roses, but they will reach up to 3 feet tall and just as wide. For many applications, like near your front windows, this is an ideal height. Because Carpet Roses have superior disease resistance, you won't constantly be worried about mildew and black spot. This should make them worth a consideration.



The variety here is new and called Flower Carpet Amber Rose. It offers flowers that come in shades of peach and pink.

Properly cultivated, Flower Carpet Roses can produce as many as a thousand blooms in a year.... Wow!

Iceberg Roses are another of the easy care roses you can grow here. Introduced in 1958 these very colorful additions to your garden are

also prolific bloomers. Maybe you thought Iceberg Roses only came in white? Well there is good news here too.

The Iceberg Rose is a Floribunda type and typically grows to 3 to 4 feet in height with a spread of up to 5 feet or more. Pruning for floribunda roses is more simple than with Hybrid Tea Roses in that you needn't worry so much about the specific location on the stem and slant of a cut, but simply prune to form.



This trouble-free rose will fill your garden with color virtually non-stop all season, while it keeps your garden work time to a minimum. Like the Flower Carpet, the Iceberg is mildew resistant.

Though Icebergs are subject to a few fungal diseases, by keeping your watering off of the leaves you can minimize this.

Some Iceberg roses are climbers, or vining roses in case that appeals to you.

### What is a disease resistant rose?

Disease resistant does not mean disease proof. A disease resistant rose is a hardy variety that will not be as susceptible to an attacking disease. You'll not have to spray as often to keep the plant healthy, and if you follow good horticultural practices; keeping the foliage dry, well trimmed and thinned out for good air flow and proper plant spacings, you may not have to spray at all.

Rose breeding is a process of decades not years. Rose flowers have male

and female parts (stamens and pistils). When a rose is pollinated within it's own flower, it naturally has the same mother and father, and so will have the same characteristics. If we want something new, something that is disease resistant, we need to make some changes.

What the hybridizers have done is experiment around with the pollen from the stamens on one flower and the pistils from another. This "cross-pollination", if successful will create a rose with different characteristics from either parent. The process is actually very complex and time consuming. They eventually have a new variety with all the characteristics desired. Then they take cuttings from this new variety and these cuttings



become the new "cultivar". All we have to do is purchase the new cultivar.

### Other Cultivars

The Knock Out Rose is another group of disease resistant cultivars developed in the past few years. Tons of flowers and drought tolerant. Resistant to black spot, mildew and rust. Even shade tolerant. They have good fragrance and are a super addition to most every landscape and garden.

This is the Pink Double Knock Out rose. The petal count is 35 to 40 and one plant will produce an awesome display of color.

There are even Hybrid Teas that are disease resistant like Just Joey and

Electron, and Floribundas like Europeana and the Playboy Rose. So, don't give up on having roses just because you heard they were too finicky.

### Where and How to Plant Groundcover and Floribunda Roses

Because these types of roses are relatively modest in size, there are lots of options for your garden. Plant them individually among other shrubs. Their color will make a super accent. Plant along an otherwise drab wall and provide a bright colorful border. They make fantastic colorful hedges. To keep the show going during the cold season plant them among some eye-catching winter annuals like pansies or snapdragons.

### Basic Care

As with most of your plants, don't over water. Most of these roses are drought tolerant and do best with 3 days a week water during the hot season when established. You do need to check the moisture though because not all soils drain at the same rate. Roses (like fruit trees and many other flowers) like to eat! That means regular fertilization through the flowering season. There are liquid fertilizers; Dr Q's Liquid Gold Dust and easy to use Dr Q's Rose Food granular fertilizers, so it doesn't need to be difficult to see that they get fed.

Pruning for the Groundcover and Floribunda roses is very simple and really only needs to be done in late March and September. You'll find free Rose & Fruit Tree Pruning and Winter Plant Care seminars at all the Star Nursery stores every January.

## Winter Highlights

Easy Care Roses

Your Family's Christmas Tree

Compost What is it - Benefits?

Saving Next Summers' Fruit

Why Plants Need Food

Dr. Q's Winter Gardening Calendar

Winter Weed Prevention

Cold Hardy Plants

## Your Family's Christmas and Holiday Tree Selection, Care and Recycling



The holidays are a time for family gatherings, great food and celebration. The tradition of a cut fir tree adds a wonderful fragrance and charm to our homes. The combination of your decorative imagination along with the natural beauty of a genuine conifer brings out the absolute best in holiday spirit.

Beside, the holidays just don't seem the same without a "real" tree.

Did you know: This tradition also benefits our communities and our economy in other ways? There are about 1 million acres in production for growing Christmas trees. These tree farms provide enough oxygen daily for the requirements of 18,000,000 people. They also "consume" carbon dioxide! As long as we are responsible in how we care for and dispose of our tree, live-cut conifers truly provide many important benefits! The jobs they provide are now more important than ever.

Selecting your tree. Pick out your tree after you have made an inspection of the space in your home that you intend to place it. The spot you pick should be as far away from heat sources and air ducts as possible. Then take a quick measurement of the height and width available in the area you have in mind. Now let's go shopping for your next holiday tree.

Many families come into Star Nursery to select their tree every year as a matter of tradition. We do our best to see that the trees we have to choose from are healthy and beautiful. We also provide that "fresh cut" for good water uptake. Wherever you go to purchase your cut tree, make sure you check the freshness of the tree as well as the beauty and shape, so that you have safety as well as enjoyment.



Some trees with more spacing between the branches might work better if you have large ornaments. Trees with unusual form can actually be made to look spectacular with a little imagination. You may find a tree placed on its stand "off-vertical" due to a poor initial cut. This might look bad, but can

easily be remedied before you leave the store.

If you've found a tree that appeals to you, check its freshness. A few inner brown needles from the tree's annual shed will drop off so do not be too concerned with this. To begin checking your tree's freshness, run your fingers through the branches; shake the tree to remove these dead inner needles. Now, the needles remaining should be flexible and not fall easily. Grasp a branch with your thumb and forefinger and pull it toward you to check for flexibility. If the green needles continue to come off, or the branches are just too stiff; choose a different tree.

When you purchase your tree from Star Nursery we will make sure you get that "fresh cut" on the base of the trunk to allow for water uptake. Also, ask for and hold onto the recycling notice they give you to help you remember how to recycle your tree after the holidays are over. When you get your tree home, keep it watered to ensure freshness throughout the season.

Once home, place the tree in water as soon as possible. Most species can go 6 to 8 hours after cutting the trunk and still take up water, but every minute counts. Don't bruise the cut surface or get it dirty. If the bottom becomes damaged, dirty or overly dry, the best idea is to re-cut it. Always keep an adequate supply of water in the tree stand. Tree preservatives can help keep the pores of the trunk open, but won't do any good if you don't keep water in the tree stand AT ALL TIMES.

Way too often Christmas trees are tossed into the garbage and headed for the landfill. Make the removal of your tree a part of your holiday celebration. Think about what type of impression you want to make when you decide what to do with your old tree. You spend great energy to teach your children to be considerate and responsible. The decision as to what to do with your tree is an important responsibility! Give the old tree another life! It truly can be a good example of citizenship, as a tree returns to mulch. Demonstrate that happiness is a community affair, and recycle that tree.

Important: Never burn your Christmas tree in a fireplace or wood stove. Pines, firs and other evergreens have a high risk for uncontrolled fire.

Have a safe, happy and environmentally friendly Holiday Season!

Merry Christmas and the Happiest Holidays Ever!

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# Compost - Planting Mix Just what is it - Why we use it

Although there are many varieties of soil throughout the desert southwest, for the most part our soils are rock and clay. Drainage is very poor and the soil is compacted and hard. To simply dig this soil up, then replace it around a new shrub or tree is to beg for the dirt to return to the extremely hard, non-porous, non-breathing soil that it was before the hole was dug.



On the other extreme of hard-packed slow draining soils are those landscapes that are extremely sandy and fast draining. If nothing is done to enhance the retention of water, we will very likely have plants that die of thirst.

Here's what a functioning soil should do: decompose organic matter toward humus, glue soil

particles together in aggregates for good structure, protect roots from diseases and pathogens, retain nutrients, transport retained nutrients to the plant, produce hormones that help plants grow, help maintain proper pH levels, filter pollutants.

Functional soil is an extensive ecosystem consisting of minerals, bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, arthropods, and earthworms. These interact and together they perform vital functions for healthy soil. A functioning soil is able to transport nutrients to the plant, protect roots from diseases and parasites, produce hormones that help plants grow, break down pollutants, and improve good soil structure. Here in the desert southwest they also perform a vital role decomposing the available organic matter in order to keep pH at tolerable levels. A balance of sand, silt, clay and organic material is required for optimum plant health.

## So, what is compost?

Technically, compost can be comprised of a number of different organic materials; from plant trimmings to food waste. Compost is simply material that is "de-compos-ing". There can be a number of health issues related to composting certain food items, and one needs to carefully observe and control the process to keep it safe. However, when using only vegetative matter for composting (no dairy or meat) these issues are less

of a concern. Dr Q's Paydirt, a premium compost, uses no dairy or meat products and is completely organic.

Almost anything added to the soil is a soil-amendment. Fertilizers are amendments that provide specific nutrients, while composts, mulches or soil builders provide the foundation for complex functions in the soil. The goal of using compost is to know the limitation or deficiency of the soil and then using compost; correct that deficiency, enabling the soil to function.

Bacteria and fungi, kept in balance, are beneficial to soil. They act as decomposers, consuming pathogens and organic matter and producing sticky, mucus-like substances that act as glue to hold the soil together. These aggregates provide good soil structure, allowing air and water to move through. Providing this "organic matter" is required in order to keep these tiny microbe workers on-the-job.



Millions of species of fungi exist. Some fungi are decomposers consuming simple sugars, while another group - known as mycorrhizal fungi - are beneficial to plants and, for some plant species, are vital to their survival. Mycorrhizal fungi work in a symbiotic relationship with plant roots, drawing their energy from roots and providing the host plant with increased nutrients. Mycorrhizal fungi are catalysts in the microbe-producing process. Fungi produce enzymes that further break down tissues, making nutrients such as nitrogen available to plants. Forming vast networks of tiny filaments, fungi contribute to soil structure and the general health of the soil.

Developing a quality soil profile in your landscape is the goal. In order for the plant roots to soften up the surrounding soil and break through the "in-ground pot" symptom so common here, the area surrounding the plant must increase in microbial activity. Plants naturally stimulate microbial activity by sending out signaling compounds through their roots. These natural chemicals cause fungi and certain bacteria to begin growing and helping the new planting survive, breaking up the surrounding, hard soil.



Too rich a mixture of organic material is not recommended however. The microbial activity that currently exists would be overwhelmed. You can think of microbial activity as a small campfire burning hot and bright. If you were to drop a large amount of wood on the small fire, your fire will

smoke and probably smother. Organic matter can decay in two different directions: it can decay into beneficial humus (microbe food) increasing microbial populations; or, it can ferment into alcohol, which acts like a preservative, preventing microbial activity.

Dr Q's Paydirt is a premium product because the process by which it is made is carefully controlled and completed BEFORE the planting mix is bagged and shipped into a Star Nursery store. If you want the best for your new plants, use only Dr Q's Paydirt and then add some Gold Dust Starter fertilizer to assure the new roots are given the right formula for growth. Top this off with Dr Q's Plant Tonic in order to spur new root growth and reduce shock and you're giving your plants the absolute best start possible.

Remember the good old days when doctors made house calls?

I do, Dr. Q here. I can help diagnose your irrigation needs, seasonal stress issues, pest control, nutrient deficiencies, pruning and more.



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## Saving Next Summers' Fruit from Disease & Insects - Now!

During the winter our deciduous fruit trees like: peaches, apples, apricots and others are sleepy, dormant and so we tend to just leave them alone. However their bark is often laden with insect eggs or fungal spores that are just waiting for the nice weather to come again in the spring. Then they wake up and begin their assault on our wonderful crops or fruit. You know, insects and various germs are part of nature's competition for this food, and we can't just expect to have success unless we get in there and do something.

One of our fruits common enemies here in the desert southwest is coryneum blight. This is a fungal disease where the spores hibernate over the winter on twigs, branches and buds.



The spores produced from these tissues are later spread through the tree and neighboring trees by rain and wind. As they mature they will cause substantial damage to the fruit.

The lesions produced by this disease are easy to spot, but after the fruit has been infected like this, the damage is irreversible. The fruit will be

tough, less flavorful unattractive and basically not desirable. As you see, most of the fruit in the tree will be affected.

Coryneum is active at low temperatures, which is why it can become such a problem. With as little as 24 hours of moisture from a winter rain storm and temps even as low as 36°F, this fungal disease can grow and spread. Effective treatment is usually a combination of pruning and copper based fungicides (like Liqui-Cop) during January. Care should be taken when disposing of the pruning debris! There are many other fungal disease that attack our fruit trees, but this is one of the most common.



Insects are another cause for loss of a fruit crop. Many, like these lecanium scale insects are soft bodied and over-winter on a fruit tree on twigs and branches in their nymph phase of development (photo at top of second column). They produce large amounts of honeydew waste, which then also adds to the opportunity for the tree bark to develop sooty mold. So, not only do you have the likelihood for fruit damage from the insect, but then also from the disease the insect will help to promote.

Insects can live on your trees throughout the year. They can hide under the bark during the winter months only to emerge in the spring to consume



leaves, buds and blossoms. There are actually a combination of techniques available to help control these kind of insects on your fruit trees.

A number of different horticultural oils have been used for a long time in controlling scale insects, aphids and mites on woody perennials. Several new oils have extended this benefit to herbaceous plants. Oils block the air holes through which the insects breathe and in some cases they act as a poison as they interact with the fatty acids of the insect. An extra benefit of some of the horticultural oils is that they can help control powdery mildew which is another threat to our local fruit crops. Because these oils disrupt how an insect feeds they can reduce the transmission of viruses from one plant to another caused by aphids or similar sucking insects.

Oils are easy to apply, pose few risks to people and do not generally threaten beneficial insects like lady bugs. They do need to be applied during the cool season. Applying an oil onto plant foliage during temps exceeding 90 degrees is risky. You can find Volck Oil at Star Nursery and this is an excellent treatment for your fruit trees to be used during the winter.

Pruning should be done in conjunction with other treatments as it represents a technique that helps to establish other aspects of plant health. Prune deciduous trees during January to help eliminate the pests that would target rotten wood. Remove any decaying or dead wood and crossing branches. Remove dropping and rotting fruit from around the base of your trees promptly. Rotting fruit is a breeding ground for many insects, which also attack the live fruit still attached to the tree.

Remove any plant debris in the area of your fruit trees. Rake up all fallen leaves and fruit to avoid pests, bacteria and mildew. Remember that stressed trees will more likely be attacked by insects than healthy ones. Help your trees fight off pests by providing deep infrequent irrigation and routine balanced fertilization with a product like Dr Q's Fruit and Nut Tree Food.

Once the early spring flowers drop and your tree has set fruit, apply an organic pesticide spray, like Spinosad. Reapply it once every three weeks throughout the growing season to keep these pest under control. Also pick your fruit a little early, before it is ripe. This is another way to keep insects from becoming a big problem. Early picked fruit will continue to ripen on its own, while fruit picked late will spoil. Make sure you give yourself the best chance to enjoy the fruits of your labor!

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# Why Plants Need Food

In many parts of the good ole USA the soil is rich in the nutrients that plants need to thrive. Not so here in the desert southwest. Not only do we deal with drought conditions here, where our average rainfall is around three inches annually, but the dirt is basically barren.

The right kind of fertilizer is the answer! If you've noticed the 3 big numbers on a bag of fertilizer, you may have wondered what these represent. Take a fertilizer like Dr Q's Tree Shrub and Vine Food for instance. On the bag you'll see "16-8-4" or the "NPK" rating of the macro-nutrients for the fertilizer. This indicates that the fertilizer insides contains 16% nitrogen, 8% phosphorous and 4% potassium. Basically the nitrogen produces foliar or top growth. Phosphorous helps with root growth, flowering and seed production. Potassium the third macro nutrient helps with plant vigor and stress as well as helping soft tissue become stronger and even helping to increase the size and quality of fruit.

This brief explanation of some of the reasons plants need the macro-nutrients does not get into the need for "micro-nutrients" or what I like to call the plant vitamins. These would include things like calcium, magnesium, sulfur, iron, manganese, copper, zinc, molybdenum and others. Without getting too deep into the chemistry of why these elements are vital to plant health just consider how often we try to add iron to our soil in order to help our plants green up. Plant health requires a balance of an adequate supply of all these nutrients, and our soils lack many of them. Often though our dirt may have plenty of a specific element (take calcium for instance) it may be in a form unavailable for plant uptake.

High pH is common in our local soils and water, typically between 8.0 and 8.4. When pH is low the soil is "acid", when the pH is high the soil is "basic", and the scale is logarithmic (like the Richter scale for earthquakes) where a one point increase is actually an increase of 10 times. So, if a plant prefers a pH of 6.0 and the soil it's growing in has a pH of 8.0, the pH is really 100 times higher than it prefers.

Alkalinity is the ability of water to neutralize acid and is generally a measure of calcium hardness. As the pH level goes up the alkalinity tends to follow. If you've looked around many of the landscapes in the desert southwest you may have noticed areas where the soil surface was crusted white. The level of calcium carbonate or calcium sulfate along with other salts in the soil accumulate and crystallize at the surface because they are in such large

amounts. The bottom line is that our soils and water are very hard and this inhibits our plants ability to take in vital nutrients.

Many of the plant stress symptoms I've seen over the years are related to nutrient issues. Plant malnutrition if you would. The yellowing of the leaves on this citrus tree (photo below) are a symptom of iron chlorosis; insufficient iron.

How we can combat this problem is with THE RIGHT kind of fertilizer and fertilization program. Why I say the right kind is that due to our very different type of soil and water here, many fertilizers that are popular throughout the country and made for other areas do not have the right balance for our desert soils.

High pH and alkalinity make the nutrients that are in our soils unavailable to plant root systems. So, to combat this problem the entire line of Dr Q's fertilizers has an extra dose of sulfur. Sulfur when worked on by soil bacteria will create acids, and so this brings the pH down to much better levels where the plant root systems can operate efficiently.

Another vital aspect for the right fertilizer to have for our desert communities is that it be groundwater-safe. Run off from our lawns and landscapes goes into our lake and right back into our drinking water. Nitrogen, one of the macro-nutrients in all fertilizers is harmful to our health if present in significant amounts. Dr Q's nitrogen is slow release and groundwater safe. Made mostly from urea nitrogen, it requires that bacteria act on it before it becomes nitrate nitrogen and so stays with the soil instead of running off down the drain. Due to the harshness of our climate slow release nitrogen is also much better for plant health in the long run.

The extra amount of micro-nutrients that are put into Dr Q's fertilizers are so very important for keeping your plants looking their best and living longer. Plants need more than just water, they need food. The right kind of food is critical here in the southwest desert more than many other parts of the country. Fertilization should be routinely done but not overdone. Bag instructions not only tell you how much to apply to what size plant, but let you know when. Over-fertilizing can be hazardous to a plant just as fertilizing at the wrong time. As we get into February, it will once again be time to fertilize our landscape (other than Palms that are fed during the summer). So, check out what fertilizer you have in the garage and see if you have the right stuff for our troubled soils. Don't let spring get here without giving



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## Dr. Q's Winter Gardening Calendar

### December

- Fertilize winter lawns to maintain good color product like Dr Q's Winter Gem.
- Want winter color? Plant Pansies, Snapdragons and Stock. These are cold hardy and will bloom through April.
- When watering, avoid ice, water between 9 am and 10 am.
- Protect your Queen Palms from the cold, use a Palm Parka.
- When selecting a Christmas tree, make sure it's fresh, with a fresh bottom cut.
- Protect your Pygmy Palms and other frost tender shrubs. Cover them with N-Sulate or use one of the new "Plant Protector Bags".

### January

- Recycle your holiday tree. Check [www.StarNursery.com](http://www.StarNursery.com) for a complete listing of drop-off locations.
- Protect tender succulents and cacti from cold by covering them with N-Sulate.
- Prune your roses – don't forget the "Rose Potion" and attend our seminars (see info at lower right)
- Gray aphid population explodes in the winter, try a long lasting insecticide like Bayer Rose & Flower Insect Killer, so you don't need to spray so often.
- Protect deciduous fruit trees. Use Liqui-Cop and Volck oil where appropriate.

### February

- Pep up your house plants by repotting them into slightly larger containers. Use a high quality potting soil like Filthy Rich™.
- This is the month to prepare your vegetable and flower beds for spring gardens. For each 100 square feet of soil, sprinkle four pounds of 16-20-0, ammonium phosphate.
- Treat soils with Green Light's Iron & Soil Acidifier. Mix well and then water. Top this off with three inches of organic mulch.
- Seeds to sow: African Daisies, Alyssum, Basil, Carnation, Delphinium, Gaillardia, Gloriosa Daisy, Hollyhocks, Larkspur, Lupines, Nasturtium, Pansy, Petunia, Phlox, Poppy, Scabiosa, Shasta Daisy, Snapdragon, Sweet William, Verbena, Viola.
- Powdery mildew may appear on new rose growth, grapes, cucumbers, citrus and euonymus. Prevent it by keeping over-spray off your shrubs, treat infected plants with fungicide.
- Warmer weather of an early false spring can be expected, but this doesn't mean we're out of the woods for possible freezes. Keep an eye on weather forecasts. Cover those frost-tender plants when the warnings come.
- February is fertilizing time for deciduous fruit, nut and shade trees. Use Dr. Q's Fruit and Nut fertilizer or a balanced fertilizer. Apply according to rates on the bag.
- Pecan trees and grape vines need extra zinc to help them produce their best, use Dr. Q's Plant Tonic.

### Dr. Q's Winter Plant Care Seminars [www.StarNursery.com](http://www.StarNursery.com)

**Free** and informative workshops concerning pruning, fertilizing and pest prevention for Roses and Fruit Trees.

**Roses:** Sat January 8th and January 22nd, 10:00 am and 2:00 pm

**Fruit Trees:** January 15th and January 29th, 10:00 am and 2:00 pm

## Winter Weed Prevention Winter is the time to do something

Because of the cold temps we usually don't think about weeds much during the winter, but we should! Sure they aren't sprouting up all over the place now, but the seeds are on the ground and they are just waiting for the warmer temperatures and perhaps a bit of rainfall to get started.

Most of the plants commonly classified as weeds here are spread by their seeds. Many of these are annuals, like crabgrass or Poa Annua. These typically do not survive the winter. Without these plants getting re-started through seeding, they wouldn't be much of an issue.



Crabgrass (on the left) is one common pest in desert lawns as is Poa Annua (below). This grass will generally make your lawn look "spotty" with small dark green patches during winter.

Have you ever gone out into your yard and pulled or killed all the weeds only to see them return in a few weeks? This is probably because the weeds had seeds. If you used a post-emergent herbicide, it killed the living plant but did nothing to prevent the seed from germinating and producing new weeds later.

In Star Nursery's chemical aisle you'll find regular post-emergent weed killers. Like Round-Up these kill living plants, but do not affect dormant seeds. Look here and further, on aisle end caps and in the front section of the store for our pre-emergent weed killers. Products like GreenLight's "Portrait" and "Amaze" or others. Here is how they can be helpful to you in your attempt to control weeds.



Pre-emergents prevent seeds from germinating. These special herbicides typically do not have post-emergent in them so they do not harm any of the live plants in the area. So, provided you read the label, you don't need to worry about hurting plants that you want to grow and thrive, when you

apply a pre-emergent. Also these types of herbicides generally last for up to four months in the soil, so only a few applications take care of your problems for a long time.

Just when is the best time to apply a pre-emergent? Lets consider when seeds are likely to germinate. Cold temperatures inhibit most seed germination, so though they may be lying on the soil waiting, it is unlikely they'll be doing much without a little warmth. Warmer days can often begin as early as February. The other thing they usually need is a little moisture. They can get this by being located near other irrigated plants or in your lawn. Even though we don't have much rainfall here weed seeds have plenty of opportunities to get started.



Spurge is one of the bigger lawn nuisances here and it is very controllable with pre-emergent. By applying 4 month pre-emergent in mid to late February to those areas of your landscape where you do not want volunteer plants, you can effectively control these until June. Another application in late June will give you control until late October.

In your lawn, the prime consideration is whether you intend to over-seed or not. If you apply pre-emergent to your lawn it will prevent the grass seed from germinating the same as... spurge seed for example. So, if you want to use a pre-emergent and you need to over-seed your lawn, you'll want to get the grass seed going first before you apply the pre-emergent. Also, the new grass seed will be vulnerable for a little while after it has first sprouted. Read the label on the pre-emergent to confirm this, but generally I'd wait at least four weeks.

Whether they are in your lawn or your landscape weeds are a nuisance. Post emergent herbicides like GreenLights "Com-Pleet" or a weed-n-feed work well to make the weeds disappear quickly. In order to get some long term control make sure to use a pre-emergent weed preventer whenever you treat with a weed killer. A small amount of effort this winter to prevent weeds can reduce your overall maintenance a lot!

## Eagle Leaf Rake & Star Trash Bags (45 gallon • 1 mil)

**\$7.99\***  
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## Cold Hardy Plants Lots of plants thrive in winter

Living in a part of the country with a climate that cooks in the summer and freezes in the winter makes plant selection a critical part of having a healthy and beautiful landscape. Here in Southern Utah our temperature extremes are just that. Very hot – then very cold! So, what types of plants can take the winter here?

First of all there is a whole category to look at: Deciduous! Most shrubs and trees that lose their leaves in the winter adapt quite well to our winter temperatures. In this group we'll find lots of fruit trees, Crape Myrtles, Lilacs, Chaste Trees, Rose of Sharon (actually a variety of hibiscus), Ash Trees, Chinese Pistache, Silk Trees and so many more. All of these are also great for planting in the cold season. Because our soil does not typically freeze due to our sunny winter days, the roots of these plants can grow and expand throughout the winter. This helps the shrub or tree become that much better prepared for the coming summer heat waves.

Some of the deciduous plants may be a bit heat tender and require that you help them achieve a large and healthy root system in order to thrive, or that you give them some afternoon shade for summer. What you need to do is to read the information that we put onto our signs that are provided to help you understand your new plant.

As you notice, our signs give you the common name along with the botanical. In the lower edge, left of the bar code you'll find out whether it's deciduous, evergreen, semi-evergreen or "tender".

Our narrative will explain the size it will likely attain when mature and whether it needs protection from afternoon sun. Often a low temperature that it would be damaged by is also specified.

There are many more plants that handle the cold of a Southern Utah

winters' night besides those that are deciduous. Most of the conifers are cold hardy. Arborvitae, Spruce, Juniper and others. Cypress trees bear cones but some are more cold hardy, like the Leyland Cypress (to

-10°F), while the Italian Cypress prefers winters that don't get below about +10°F. The latter Cypress deals much better with extreme heat though.

Climate zones (which take in many factors) are specified in the Sunset Western Garden book and differ from the "cold hardiness" zones which are specified by the USDA. These USDA zones range from 2 with low temps of -50°F, to 11 with a low temp of 40°F. St. George is generally rated to USDA zone 7 (or Sunset zone 10) which may see low temps to -10°F and slightly below. Often these low temperatures do not last long in Southern Utah, so many plants that are not rated to survive this temperature actually experience a longer life, or recover from frost die-back. Still, it is best to know more about the plants that you select and hope to keep for many seasons before you buy. Star Nursery wants to be your partner in this and that's why we are constantly working on our plant sign narratives and Star Notes. "Star Nursery – The Right Price, The Best Advice!®"



### Southern Utah Star Nursery Locations:

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385 W. Telegraph Rd. Washington City, UT (1/2 mile from Green Springs Dr. & the 15) (435) 986-0820