Growing Roses in Vermont

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Interest:
*large family Rosaceae, includes many other ornamentals (flower, shrubs, trees)
one of most complex groups of ornamentals, thousands of cultivars in various classes
*native to most parts of the world, depending on the species
*one of oldest cultivated groups of plants, first mentioned in 2300 BC
*used herbally as well as ornamentally over centuries, hips rich in vitamin C

Habit:
growth rate, height, width, hardiness all vary with cultivar (see separate listing)

Planting:
*check fertility, pH with soil test--lime if needed
dig large hole as possible, 2 times as wide and across as roots (if possible)
amend backfill with up to half compost, peat moss or similar organic matter
*add phosphorus in hole at planting
* key is to cover bud graft--lower swollen area on most roses--less hardy area
*if bare root (just that in spring, only buds on top), mound soil over most of canes--helps prevent canes and buds from drying out, helps prevent suckers from below bud graft

Culture:
*soil--well-drained, some species prefer sandy
*light--sun
*watering--well watered
*fertility--high fertility as with rose fertilizer; organic may not be sufficient unless highly fertile and organic soil; may combine organic such as seaweed or fish emulsion with controlled release fertilizer; hybrid teas often require more fertility than shrub types

Landscape Uses:
borders--usually solely for roses, unless shrub types as backgrounds
*containers (especially miniature types) and raised beds (often facilitates culture)
*massing (especially in island beds in lawns, informal curved or formal rectangular)
hedges or along walls, especially shrub and rugosa types
*fences and trellises (climbing types)

Pruning:
*remove dead canes, branches--late spring after see bud break
*shape--remove long branches where not desired, early spring or after bloom
*fall only if diseased or dead wood, or need to fit under overwintering covers; some prune in late fall or winter, but then if dieback have to re.prune in spring, often lower; pruning too early in fall allows diseases to enter with slow or no wound healing
*for minimal strong branches to produce show flowers on modern hybrids
*cut back to just above a bud facing in direction new branch is desired
*remove overlapping, crossing canes
OH 68 Roses

*remove older canes, about 1/3 each year
*choose cultivars for shape, habit, size rather than prune extensively to those desired

Staking:
*allow to grow in natural form, generally not needed
*climbing types (many shrub types are long cane or arching, not truly climbing):
*train up wall or on trellis (2D or 3D shape), natural or in vase or other design
*train on network or crossing twine, one foot off ground, for maximum shoots
*wrap around trunks of spring flowering trees and allow to grow up through

Winter protection:
*choose hardy varieties, minimal to none needed; "modern" hybrids (see separate listing) are generally not hardy except in warm microclimates in Vermont
*if marginally hardy: styrofoam rose cones; mound one foot or more around base mulch or straw or similar organic if no rodents and small mammals, soil if rodents, apply either late in fall around Thanksgiving; some recommend fresh horse manure late in Fall; remove mulches when snow melts in Spring or early as possible
*climbing--if not hardy, remove from supports and lay on ground, covering as above
*key is to cover bud graft--lower swollen area on most roses--less hardy area

Transplanting:
*traditionally by digging as many roots as possible, cutting tops back to 6-12" high
*soak ground (forced pressure from nozzle in ground) until plant pulls out readily

Pests:
*aphids--insectidal soaps, rose sprays
*Japanese beetles--same as above, pick off, not traps
*cane borers--rose sprays, systemic insecticides
*rose chafer--as for aphids
*many more, susceptibility varies with species and even cultivar, more with modern hybrids than shrub types, modern types generally need intense spray schedule
*scout weekly if not daily
*choose resistant varieties to diseases

Diseases:
*powdery mildew--fungicide, Remedy
*black spot--specific fungicide
*leaf spots--fungicides
*viruses--prune infected parts, keep plants healthy

References (pests and diseases):

Any products and references mentioned are for example only, and are not endorsed to the exclusion of any not mentioned. 4/07