

Can You Really Use Rid-X On Roses?



Photo by David W. Marshall, UF-IFAS Leon County Extension: Knockout Rose

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Its summer, its Florida, and we are in “The Bug and Fungus Capital of the USA”. It’s time to gear up, and get ready to do battle with the enemies that lie in wait to destroy our lawns and gardens.

So where to turn for ammunition? The answers are many. There’s the wall of chemicals at the big box-store, and quick-n-easy chemical fixes from commercials on the tube. You can find great advice at your county extension offices, and lots of good solutions at your local nurseries and garden shops. Last, but not least, there are the home remedies, solutions made from stuff found around the house.

I love these best of all. Many of these pearls of wisdom are rooted in folk lore, while some were birthed by garden-writing gurus. Some have great common sense, some not so much. They are all a lot of fun, and I’m sure we’ve all heard a few of them.

*Get rid of snails/slugs with beer (this one actually works; hey, what snail can resist a party?).

*Pour a few cans of Drano on the drip line of your stubborn-to-bear pecan tree and presto, you're in the pecan business. (It's a great source of potash, but if it cleans your drainage pipes, what must it be doing to that root system?) Not recommended.

*When planting corn, the amount of seed in each hill: "One for the cut worm, one for the crow, one to rot, and one to grow". (Did this guy know about gardening in Florida or what?) It's the simplest, most logical advice I've ever heard. Plant plenty, and then you will (usually, probably) get something!

*And the miracle cure for ailing roses using Rid-X? It's very mysterious; I researched this one and it still baffles me. (But yeast is a miraculous thing!)

We all like simple solutions. But having healthy plants requires more than quick chemical fixes, or ougly-boarding your way down the garden path with stuff from under the kitchen sink. How we tend our plants also has an effect on the earth we live on. It's important to use a little common sense when solving your garden problems.

Start by choosing plants that do well in our climate; they're the ones that will thrive with less chemical intervention. Seek out your county extension people, experienced gardeners that are having success, and good garden centers when choosing plants to grow in your garden. Local experience is a hard thing to beat.

When a plant does become sick, look first for underlying problems that might be weakening the plant. Pay attention to the soil where your plant is growing. It is the world the plant lives in. Spend some time learning how to make it a better place. Use organic materials for fertilizer. Recycle your lawn clippings and kitchen scraps to mulch and feed your plants. Put those goodies where they belong, on the plants, not in the landfill where they do no good.

Water your plants when they need it. A drought stressed plant is more susceptible to pests and disease. But don't drown the plant either.

If it becomes necessary to use a chemical to solve a problem on your plant, use the mildest, most earth-friendly one you can. Bugs and diseases are getting stronger due to our over use of powerful insecticides and fungicides.

And most of all, never stop experimenting; it's how we learn. Who knows, maybe you'll figure out the proper use of Rid-X on roses.

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