

KENT'S COLUMN – June-July 2008: As this is being written on June 8, the temperature outside is 94 degrees F. and only the fact that a mild breeze is blowing makes it possible to breath if you are outside for some reason. This unpleasant subject is broached for two reasons. Work you must continue to do on your roses must be done very early in the mornings when the temperatures are still in the 70's. It's not only that your own well-being is of prime importance, it's also that roses need their usual attention but can not cope with spraying, for example, above 80 degrees; low 70's is better. Here is what we face right now:

- (1) **Water.** The kind of heat and wind we have been having suck the moisture right out of the ground. Do not, repeat, do not water lightly every day or two. Instead, water heavily every three or four days. I think in terms of a gallon plus for each plant. My fancy watering system — one rosarian at the end of a hose — makes it possible to count out a gallon, 1001, 1002, 1003, etc. up to 10020, or more, depending on the intensity of the stream.
- (2) Standard Dead Heading and Spraying, as I said above, must be done early in the morning for both your and the roses' sake.
- (3) Aphids are rampant right now. Other than using a common insecticide, such as Malathion, in your regular spraying, you may want to mist the tops of the plants each evening or two with **Talstar**, or **Orthene 97**, from a squeeze bottle. The Orthene 97 mist will also work to deter Japanese Beetles, which are due any day now. However, to repel the beetles you will need to mist at least two times per day, morning and evening.
- (4) Hot, dry weather also seems to call spider mites into intense activity. A strong spray of water on the bottom of leaves low to the ground, as far as I am concerned, is better than any of the very expensive miticides on the market. Unless you have a nice, long water wand, prepare to get wet!

We work hard all spring to “make” our roses and we work hard all summer to “hold” what we have. The real joy comes from a wonderful, successful show as we had last week, from the beauty of our gardens, and from sharing our roses with friends.