

What is Your Dilemma?

By Patsy Williams

In the life of every rosarian a little rain **must** fall. As with rain, things do not always happen at the most convenient of times. It is the unexpected that keeps us on our toes. Everything does not come up roses without a little assistance on our part.

The Small Garden Dilemma - "My garden is too small; I cannot put enough into it." Not everyone has the time to maintain a larger garden. Choose your varieties wisely, and give them the very best care that you can, and your garden will look better and produce more than a larger garden. This scenario also means that you have to remove a bush before you can plant another. By doing so, you keep your bed in better condition because the hole is reworked before a new bush is planted. "There isn't enough space to grow all that I want to grow!" The fact is, the small yard is usually much better taken care of than a large yard. A well-cared for small yard can even produce bigger and better blooms than a large one.

The Dilemma Of A Large Yard - There isn't enough time to take care of all that is planted. You spend your life in the yard, and every insect that resides in Houston has your address. The larger the planting that you have, the bigger the feast for all insects and the more disease. The dilemma, here, is which bed can you remove to make more time for you, the rosarian? There is so much to do that you do not get around to all the beds before it is time to start over again. There is always room for another rose, but there is no time to care for it.

The "Where to Find It" Dilemma - When we view the winners' list from a rose show in the Rose-ette there will be varieties in it that you **must** have in your garden! "Where can I find them?" There are a number of the top exhibition roses that are still new on the scene. Many have come from Canada, South Africa, are rooted from cuttings, or are budded or grafted by the exhibitor. When you hear, "This variety isn't available in the States," no one is trying to put you off or keep you from having a particular variety. Most rosarians will be more than happy to give you a cutting to root if they have the variety. You just have to ask and be willing to go and get it. Rooting a rose can be a very fulfilling experience. Try it, if you like to see things grow from scratch.

Whether you have a small yard or a large yard, you will always have decisions to make. All rosarians have to try something different! You might grow a variety for a while and then decide that this rose is not for you. So dig it up, and take it to the next pruning meeting. The bush will find a new home, and you will have space to plant a new rose.

The "What Varieties to Buy" Dilemma - Visit other gardens, and see how they grow their roses before you spend your money. Check out rose shows for varieties that you might enjoy. Ask other rosarians. Read what you can about the newer varieties.

The Handbook for Selecting Roses is a rating book which gives you a rating of how each variety performs. Take it with you when you go to buy roses (available at our monthly meetings or from the American Rose Society.)

The only way to keep this book up-to-date is for us to fill out the Roses in Review questionnaire, which is usually in the July issue of the *American Rose*, or www.ars.org in July. You may not grow very many of the named varieties, but fill out a form if you grow even one. Every report is important! Your input is needed.

The "I'm New At Growing Roses" Dilemma - Everyone had to begin somewhere. We all were new in the growing of roses at one time. People shared knowledge with us, and now we can share with you. Call a Consulting Rosarian for answers to your questions. No question is too dumb or trivial to ask. If the CR does not have an answer, he will point you in the right direction for an answer.

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