

Bell County Master Gardeners
Tip of the Week
By Frances Idoux
"FRAGRANT EARTH KIND ROSES"

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet..." From Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare.

When we think of roses, fragrance is probably the first thing that comes to mind. When we plan to plant a rose, superior pest tolerance and disease resistance need to come to mind. Fortunately, gardeners don't have to sacrifice the fragrance of roses to find good choices for tough landscape conditions.

The Texas A&M Extension Service has spent years of testing and research to develop a list of Earth Kind roses. With some personal research, a gardener can find a rose that is both strong and fragrant.

The first rose to be designated Earth Kind is a medium pink shrub rose named "Belinda's Dream." The rose was developed by Dr. Robert Basye, a math professor at Texas A&M and named after the daughter of a friend. Like almost all roses, it requires full sun and needs to be planted in an area with good air circulation. The plant should be kept watered until established, usually about a month depending on the weather. The rose will bloom from spring throughout summer and fall until frost. The medium pink blooms are full and fragrant, just perfect for a bouquet.

The rose now known as "Carefree Beauty" was the 2006 Earth Kind rose of the year. For years this rose was often called "Katy Road Pink" and considered a "found" rose until it was identified as a rose developed by Dr. Griffith Buck at Iowa State University. Dr. Buck spent his life researching and hybridizing roses, trying to develop roses that were cold hardy, disease resistant, and pest tolerant. During his lifetime, he hybridized nearly 90 rose varieties, known as Buck Roses.

Developed by rose breeder Bill Radler, the *Knock Out* Rose was the top choice of the American Rose Society in 2000. A member of the Earth Kind list, the original *Knock Out* has been joined by six other *Knock Out* varieties. Only the newest introduction, a bright yellow rose named Sunny, is fragrant. What Texas garden wouldn't welcome a tough but fragrant yellow rose? These roses are perfect for our area, you will like their maintenance free characteristics.

Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact ask.bcmga@gmail.com