**11.11.13 Q&A**

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Q: What is the deal on sweet peas? We love the intense colors and wonderful fragrance but we can’t get them to germinate and grow.

A: I also love sweet peas but they are temperamental and hard to grow in our climate. It seems like it is always too cold or too hot. I often plant them every month from November through February with hopes of a successful crop. If one of the early plantings survives without a freeze, you could end up with a long season of great blooms. More often than not, the February planting makes it but doesn’t last long because of the heat in May.

Q: Is there still time to plant wildflowers?

A: It is best to plant them in September but if I had seed now I would go ahead and plant them. Find a site in full sun where the seed can reach the soil. The soil can be raked but it is not necessary. Do not bury the seed.

Q: It appears my rain sensor on the irrigation system has quit working. How often should they be repaired?

A: Every one to two years is not too often.

Q: What insecticides work well to control cabbage loopers? How often does it need to be applied?

A: Bt products such as Dipel, Thuricide and Bio Worm Control work well if they are applied to the undersides of the leaves as soon as you see any damage.

Q: In the past you have listed some tough modern roses and old-fashioned roses that do well in low-water-use landscapes. Please tell us again.

A: Knockout rose grows to 6 feet tall with red single-layer petaled flowers that are silver dollar size. I don’t find the doubles or pinks to be as tough as the single reds.

Katy Road rose has a large pink rose that is single layered. It has a light fragrance. Katy Road produces rose hips. They grow to 6 feet tall.

Martha Gonzales has quarter-size blood red blooms and reddish foliage. They grow to 5 feet tall. Belinda Dream has light pink florist quality buds and blooms. It grows to 6 feet tall. Mrs. Dudley Cross has light peach-colored blooms that make good cut flowers. They are thornless and grow to 7 feet tall. All of the roses described bloom for seven to nine months per year and do not need a spray program. They survive without irrigation but bloom better if watered every two weeks. Now is a good time to plant them.