

## Gardening Question and Answer

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Q. I have hackberry seedlings growing in my rose bed. Can I use the Cut Vine and Stump Killer that you always promote on your radio show in the rose bed? Roses are so sensitive to Round-up and other herbicides.

A. Yes, you are only applying the herbicide to the fresh cut on the hackberry with a small applicator brush so it should not come in contact with rose stems or shallow roots. My wife and I use it in our rose bed.

Q. Just wanted to let you know that I have harvested the first of my fall tomatoes, the BHN 968 cherry tomatoes. It appears that the CM 1823 and Tycoon full size tomatoes are about 2 weeks behind. The plants don't look as good as they did last year because of the excessive heat but we will probably have tomatoes for Halloween!

A. Thanks for the report!

Q. Our nursery has groundcovers for sale in one gallon containers. We are interested in Asiatic jasmine. Is it worthwhile to purchase them now? The price seems good. Can they be planted now?

A. Asiatic jasmine is an excellent evergreen groundcover for sun or shade. It is drought tolerant and pest free. If you bought small transplants (2inch) it often takes 2 years for a bed to fill in. If you plant the 1 gallon plants on 18 inch centers, they should fill the bed in one growing season. They can be planted now.

Q Our tropical milkweed looks good except for the aphids. Should we try to remove them with soapy water? The Monarchs and Queen butterflies are everywhere.

A. Native and tropical milkweeds are known for their companion aphids. In most cases the aphids don't hurt the plants to any noticeable degree. Expect the beneficial insects such as wasps and lady bugs to reduce the aphid population as the season progresses.

Q. I understand that it is time to fertilize the lawn for the fall. What is the recommended fertilizer?

A. I recommend that one of the fertilizers labeled "winterizer" with a 3-1-2 ratio of nitrogen to phosphate to potash be used. The common formula 18-6-12 works well. The same fertilizer can be used for your winter vegetables and flowers. It is especially important to fertilize broccoli, onions, tomatoes and the other greens if you want a full crop.