**WEB**

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**“Mow Low Q&A”**

Q: Are there any advantages to mowing our grass low when it is hot and dry? Does it save water?

A: It probably saves water in the short term, because there is less leaf surface for evapotranspiration. In terms of a combination of plant health and water savings, however, letting the grass grow tall is probably better. The tall grass shades the soil and the plant base.

Q: What is the vinca variety that is resistant to aerial phytophera? We sprinkle overhead, and our vinca melts down every year.

A: Cora vinca is the selection that resists aerial phytophera.

Q: In your opinion, what is the favorite plant of hummingbirds?

A: That is a difficult pick, but in my experience a fire bush planted in a container in full sun attracts the dominant hummingbird. Other great hummingbird plants are shrimp plant, cross vine, Turk’s cap, cape honeysuckle, salvia greggii and columbine.

Q: What kills agricultural termites? They are moving across our lawn and eating everything green.

A: Malathion or any of the regular insecticides labeled for soil insects will do the job. Follow the label instructions.

Q: Is it too early to prune our roses for the fall flush of blooms? What pesticides should we spray every week?

A: Late August or early September is the best time to prepare the roses. Cut out dead stems and open up the middles. The traditional rose pesticides are triforine for fungus and acephate for insects. Some gardeners are now using the organic control, such as spinosad instead of acephate. Sulfur products also work pretty well as fungicide.

Q: Do deer eat acorns? What else might eat acorns?

A: In my neighborhood deer seem to eat acorns, but they certainly don’t like them as well as pecans. Squirrels obviously eat acorns and some birds do as well. Blue jays, woodpeckers and doves seem to like them. Doves like pecans and acorns smashed by cars on the roads in my neighborhood.

Q: What is the best zinnia for cut flowers?

A: I like California Giant.