

# feedback

## the experts' choice

Seasonal update from Neutrog Australia : Winter '03

Open a gardening publication, listen to a gardening radio talkback program, or watch a gardening program on television and you are likely to hear about a range of different products that will assist with plant pest and disease problems.

However, these approaches all overlook the best way to prevent and overcome any plant pest or disease problem - having good plant health. At Neutrog we firmly believe that

**"Healthy plants do not get sick."**

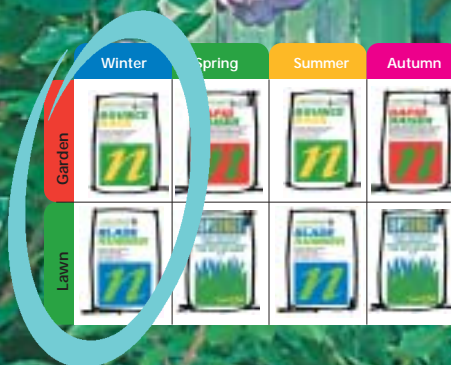
So at Neutrog we concentrate our efforts on producing premium quality, well-balanced, organic based fertilisers, which used in conjunction with our Year Round Fertiliser Program, guarantee your plants will be healthy and your garden will look great. Plants that are fed regularly with these fertilisers don't tend to get sick as often, and if they do, they are more likely to recover faster. Consequently, you do not need to buy as many products to combat plant pests and diseases.

Nevertheless, using Neutrog fertilisers will not overcome problems resulting from inappropriate plant selection (growing a shade plant in full sun), incorrect plant placement (growing roses in too much shade), and other stresses, such as lack of water, and severe root competition.

### What are the options for applying these nutrients?

We can choose to feed our plants with manufactured chemical fertilisers, which often provide a quick burst of growth that may quickly fade, or the sustained slow release effect that comes from using well-balanced organic fertilisers, which can continue for a number of months.

**Our Year Round Fertiliser Program** has been designed by experts as a simple and easy program for keeping your plants at optimal health, to provide consistent and sustainable growth of garden plants and lawns. The old belief many home gardeners held true, was they should only feed in autumn and spring. This is only correct when applying manufactured or 'chemical fertilisers'. In winter these are leached too readily and require a high soil temperature to be taken up and utilised by the plant. In summer these fertilisers are also ineffective, because they can promote a lot of lush new growth that is tender and gets burnt in the heat of this season.



However, organic fertilisers can be applied with great results all year round.

Winter is the perfect time to apply Bounce Back to your garden and Blade Runner to your lawn. Although feeding with these organic fertilisers in winter may not produce visible results at this time, the great benefits occur below the ground. Strong root growth is encouraged despite the cold conditions. The greater the root growth, the larger the surface area available to draw nutrients from the soil; this translates into a more exuberant flush of spring growth as the temperature rises. Unlike water-soluble fertilisers, Bounce Back and Blade Runner break down slowly without rapid leaching.

Another important benefit of applying organic fertiliser throughout the year is that the addition of organic matter of any type to the soil conditions it and results in improved soil structure and drainage, as well as increased earthworm and microbial activity. The end result of using organic fertilisers in your garden during winter is that your plants and lawns will be more vigorous and healthy, and they will have a head start in spring.





# The Chapel



**The Chapel at Ashton in the picturesque Adelaide Hills, is the private garden of plantswoman and garden expert, Sophie Thomson.**

**On display as part of Australia's Open Garden Scheme, The Chapel has had in excess of 2350 visitors during its open days in mid November and early March.**

Many of these visitors were familiar with Sophie from her active involvement in the Horticultural Media in SA, including a weekly gardening talkback program on Radio 5DN, regular gardening segments on Channel 7's AM Adelaide, monthly gardening columns in a number of regional newspapers, and guest appearances at nurseries, and lifestyle and gardening events. For the past 6 years she has also been a garden consultant to home gardeners in Adelaide and across South Australia.

Covering approximately 1/3 of an acre around the 1869 sandstone chapel, Sophie's garden is a romantic country style garden filled with roses, perennials and cottage garden

plants, as well as many rarer and more unusual varieties. The plants have been chosen to provide colour and interest all year round, as well as indulging her passion for perfumed plants.

Since purchasing the property from the Uniting Church in 1996, she has created a beautiful garden by planting intensively, mulching thickly, watering deeply and feeding regularly.

"The people who knew me and came along to see my garden at The Chapel, wanted to know if I practise what I preach", Sophie laughed. "Not only with regards to having a good looking garden with colour and interest all year round, but also for growing healthy plants which are not troubled by pest and disease problems. My belief is that 'happy, healthy plants don't get sick' and when we choose the right plant for the situation and water, mulch and feed them correctly, they thrive. I strongly believe that the main reason that the garden looks good and that the plants are healthy is that I follow Neutrog's Year Round Fertiliser



Program. I do not like to use chemicals in my garden, including fertilisers. I prefer to use organic, manure based fertilisers, as they give plants balanced nutrition and the addition of organic matter also improves the soil. The increase in earthworm activity is an obvious sign the soil is healthy, and if the soil is healthy, the plants will be also."

The other comments that Sophie received at her Open Gardens were related to the health of her roses, many of which are heavily underplanted, watered overhead and



in areas where the thickness of planting severely limits air circulation. These three conditions are theoretically wrong for roses and the old garden belief would suggest that these roses would be smothered with pests and diseases such as black spot and powdery mildew.

"It is true that roses do not like the severe root competition from the likes of trees and large shrubs, and these plants will certainly diminish rose vigour and performance", Sophie said. "As with any plant, once stressed for either water or

nutrients, they are more likely to be affected by plant pests and diseases. If however, you keep your roses healthy by feeding them regularly, this will not be a problem."

Sophie continued, "In the past I used Neutrog Rapid Raiser on my roses with good results. However, since I changed to using Sudden Impact for Roses in spring, summer and autumn, the results have been fantastic. My roses perform brilliantly and I have very few problems with fungal diseases such as black spot, powdery mildew and rust.

Some people are concerned if they feed their roses this often they will get too big and soft, and will not have a chance to harden up. With the extra potash that Sudden Impact for Roses contains, the growth of your rose bushes will remain the same. However, they will be troubled by less pests and diseases, produce more flowers and better quality blooms."

Recently, Sophie moved to the property adjacent to The Chapel, which is better suited to the needs of her growing family, and she is in the process of creating another garden. She has converted The Chapel into luxury Bed and Breakfast accommodation, and now her guests enjoy the wonderful garden she has created. The garden at The Chapel will again be open to the public as part of Australia's Open Garden Scheme on the 15th and 16th of November 2003.



# The Necropolis

## SPRINGVALE

The Necropolis Springvale is well known for its beautifully landscaped gardens. Fountains and running streams, bridges and rotundas, native and ornamental plantings are located throughout the cemetery, which celebrated its centenary in 2001. Covering 400 acres, the landscaped gardens include over 27,000 roses of more than 255 varieties.

Of particular interest in The Necropolis Springvale is The Garden of No Distant Place. This incorporates a network of running streams and landscaped gardens, which have been designed to reflect the colour and beauty of each season. The Books of Remembrance are housed in four glass walled Pavilions that represent the seasons. There are 12 books – one for each month and they are placed in the pavilion that corresponds with the season. e.g. June – Winter, December – Summer. The Police Memorial, in memory of all Victorian Police Officers who were killed in the line of duty. The Victorian Garden of Remembrance administered by the office of Australian War Graves.

Overseeing the maintenance of this botanical park at The Necropolis is Dominic Borg, who has been with the Trust for 23 years and is the Horticultural Services Manager. He has a team of 75 grounds staff, including a number of qualified horticulturists and apprentices. The Necropolis propagates around 7,000 roses annually including bush, standard, weeping, pillar and climbing varieties, which are used for replacement plantings and new landscapes within the grounds. Each

year Dominic and his staff hold rose pruning workshops, run as a hands on event, where the participants are equipped with gardening gloves, a pair of secateurs and are instructed in the art of rose pruning. This free event runs for the first week in June and is extremely popular. Rose budding demonstrations are also held in November for those keen to propagate their own roses – bookings are essential.

With a preference for organic based products, Dominic started using Neutrog fertilisers three years ago, and feels that the roses and gardens have benefited greatly from the use of the annual fertiliser program. "Healthy soils produce healthy plants", Dominic said, "and we have noticed that the soil is now rich and full of worms. Consequently, all our plants are healthy, producing a massive display of blooms. Also, as a result of having rich healthy soils, we do not need to spray our roses. As the plants are healthy, they are not as susceptible to insect attack and if they are attacked, they recover quickly." Initially Dominic and his ground staff were using only Rapid Raiser on the garden and Upsurge on the lawns, but after trialing Sudden Impact for Roses on their roses, they are including this premium rose fertiliser into their program.

**The public are welcome to visit these superb gardens and appreciate their beauty, and can either take an expert guided or self guided tour. The guided tour includes the memorial gardens, cemetery, mausoleum, crematorium and other points of interest – bookings are essential.**



## Adelaide Oval

**The Adelaide Oval was established in 1870 with the first Test Match being played on it in 1884, the same year that the first Test Match was played at Lords in England.**

This oval claims to be the only Test venue in Australia where there was a match won by 1 run. This happened during the Australia vs West Indies match in the 1991-1992 season. It was also the oval where the Sheffield Shield was last won by South Australia in 1996. The Adelaide Oval hosts as much winter sport as all the other major venues in Australia, with a total of 21 days played this season, mainly football, but even the occasional rugby match. It also hosts more cricket matches than the other major ovals, with 60 days to be played this season.

Despite this enormous usage the playing surface remains in peak condition, the outfield being the only one on a Test ground in Australia that has never been reconstructed.

The Oval Manager, Les Burdett, has become an icon within both the sport of cricket and the turf industry. He has received a long list of prestigious awards including the "Centenary Medal" in May 2003 for service to the sport of cricket and the turf industry, and the "Australian Sports Medal" in January 2001 in recognition for services to cricket. He has presented conference papers around Australia and overseas, been a guest speaker numerous times, including once at the invitation of the late Sir Donald Bradman, and accepted consultancies related to turf establishment and management, both in Australia and overseas.

Les is responsible for managing the 15 hectares of turf and buildings at Adelaide Oval, including 5 cricket pitches and ovals, 2 bowling greens, 45 practice cricket pitches and six

grass tennis courts. Together with his team of 14 staff, he prepares and presents the cricket pitches and surrounds for national and international cricket matches, football and rugby matches and even the occasional music concert .

Although in his 34th year as Manager, Les remains as enthusiastic about his job as he was when he started in 1969 at the age of 27, and describes his job as a "labour of love" .

The turf at the Adelaide Oval has a couch base with winter grass in the outfield. Les strongly believes that the best way for the field to take the stress and vigorous wear of the sporting events and concerts is to have healthy grass. "In this way", Les said, "I have very few problems with pest and diseases, and even if there is a lot of wear after a big event, the grass restores itself very quickly" .

Each year for the past eight seasons, Les has incorporated Blade Runner, Neutrog's organic lawn food, into his major spring renovation after the end of the football season in late September. "At this time we re-level the ground, cutting it by 8mm. The outfield is then scarified to remove the thatch and cored with holes to 100mm. 10 tonnes of gypsum, 70-80 tonnes of washed sand and 2 tonnes of Blade Runner are then applied to the 2 hectare playing field. I have found that the slow release properties of Blade Runner push the grass out of its winter dormancy, while also ensuring that the turf maintains its colour for longer. The addition of this extra organic matter has also helped with the Oval's water retention."

"There is also a great deal of worm activity below the surface of the oval. This is a good indication of a healthy soil, and I like to have the worms working for us – aerating and processing the soil", Les continued.



## Victorian Stockists / Sudden Impact for Roses / Winter 2003

BACCHUS MARSH	Darley Greenery	Lot 2 Gisborne Road	5367 4200
BRAESIDE	Gardenworld	810 Springvale Road	9798 8093
ELWOOD	Bayside Flower & Garden	419-425 St Kilda Road	9531 2666
FINLEY	Kalangadoo Cottage Nursery	RMB 3260, Dales Road	5883 3327
HOPETOUN	Hopetoun Fuel & Nursery	50 Austin Street	5083 3008
KEW	Kew Nursery	Cnr High & Gladstone Sts	9853 5669
EAST MALVERN	Wattletree Gardens Nursery	286 Wattletree Road	9509 8111
MELTON	Melton Plants & Gifts	16 Brooklyn Road	9747 8171
MORNINGTON	Mr Browns Nursery	55 Mornington-Tyabb Road	5975 6667
MT ELIZA	Lintons Garden Centre	Cnr Nepean Highway &	9787 2122
WANTIRNA SOUTH	Banksia Nursery	530 Burwood Highway	9801 1637

## Victorian Stockists / Bounce Back & Blade Runner / Winter 2003

BACCHUS MARSH	Darley Greenery	Lot 2 Gisborne Road	5367 4200
FINLEY	Kalangadoo Cottage Nursery	RMB 3260, Dales Road	5883 3327
HIGHTON(GEELONG)	Judith Creed Valley Road Nursery	9 North Valley Road	5243 4626
HOPETOUN	Hopetoun Fuel & Nursery	50 Austin Street	5083 3008
MORNINGTON	Mr Brown's Nursery	55 Mornington-Tyabb Road	5975 6667
MT EVELYN	Mt Evelyn Garden & Produce	39-41 Lilydale-Monbulk Rd	9736 2202
OUYEN	North West Ag Services	50 Farrell Street	5092 1381
RYE	Rye Produce & Nursery	2151 Nepean Highway	5985 4282
PRAHRAN	Sanctuary Flower & Garden	Cnr Williams & Dandenong Rds	9510 4196
WARRNAMBOOL	Warrnambool Co-operative	259 Timor Street	5561 2266
WONTHAGGI	White Road Garden Centre	286 White Road	5672 3884

Botanical Distribution, 45 Brady Road, North Dandenong, Vic 3157

Phone: 9701 1997, Fax: 9701 1961

Email: BotanicalD@bigpond.com.au

## Valley Nursery, Geelong



Judith Creed's Valley Road Nursery was established in 1996 and soon became one of Geelong's premier retail nurseries. The nursery operates as an old fashioned community based business, providing quality stock backed up by sound horticultural advice and genuine service. Judith's partner, Peter Hadlow runs the wholesale side of the business, producing stock for retail sales.

Each year Peter pots up approximately 1,000 bare rooted deciduous trees into pots ranging in size from eight to twenty inches. He also pots up 1,000 bare rooted

roses. To do this he produces 20 to 30 cubic metres of his own blended potting mix. Peter is a big fan of Neutrog fertilisers and for the last 12 months has taken to mixing them into his potting soil and gets great results. Since changing from using manufactured chemical fertilisers, Peter uses Rapid Raiser both in his soil mix and for top dressing his deciduous stock, and uses Sudden Impact for Roses on his roses.

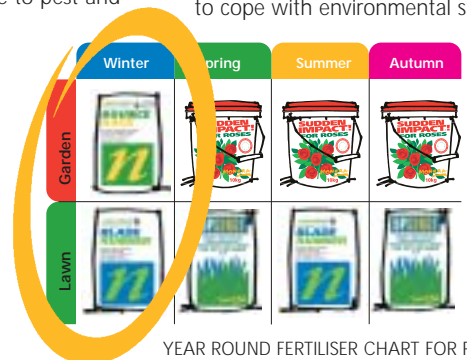
"There are a number of benefits that I have noticed changing from manufactured chemical fertilisers to Neutrog's organic based products", Peter said. "With the roses, the foliage is a deeper, darker green, with the growth stronger and more intense", Peter continued. "In the past I had problems with black spot and other fungal diseases on my roses which required preventative spraying every 7 days. Since using Sudden Impact for Roses in the potting soil and also as top dressing the pots approximately every eight weeks, I have noticed a reduction in black spot, and also mildew. Now I find that the need to spray is minimal."

## But what about your roses?

With the release of Neutrog's premium rose fertiliser, Sudden Impact for Roses, a number of gardeners are unsure about when they should use this product.

Sudden Impact for Roses was developed and trialed by the Rose Society of South Australia in conjunction with Neutrog, and these trials were only done twice a year, in early spring and late summer, as is recommended on the product label. The results showed a significant increase in the number and quality of blooms, as well as an increase in the health of the rose plants with improved resistance to pest and disease problems.

However, since these initial trials, many people have found that by using this product on their roses in spring, summer and autumn, they have even better results. Sudden



Impact for Roses is an organic based rose fertiliser which does have added Potash and Trace Elements, all of which are water soluble.

Consequently, it is not recommended for winter application as these water soluble components will readily leach away and be wasted.

Neutrog recommends that roses be fed with Bounce Back during the winter months, a view strongly supported by Ross Roses, the South Australian based rose nursery, who have supplied roses to gardeners around Australia for the past 100 years.

**Andrew Ross from Ross Roses is a strong advocate of winter feeding, as he says, "We have found that feeding our roses with Bounce Back in late July gives our plants a vital boost, enriching the soil to produce healthy plants. This results in a better display of blooms in spring".**

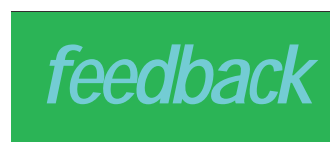
## Drought Proofing Your Roses

With many areas of Australia facing the prospect of further or continuing water restrictions, one way to drought proof your roses is making them stronger and healthier. The best way to do this is to follow the Year Round Fertiliser program for Roses as described above.

Many people would think that feeding plants makes them too lush and soft, and more sensitive to drought and heat, yet this is not always the case. The extra potash in Sudden Impact for Roses has the opposite effect, making the cell wall of the rose stronger and more able to cope with environmental stresses.

Despite the drought in their area, which has resulted in severe water restrictions, **Hopeton Fuel and Nursery in the Southern Mallee** has received great feedback from customers who have used Sudden Impact for Roses on their roses. "We have had very positive reports from our customers about this new product", owner Chris Pridgeon said. "Several have commented that it is the best year that their roses have had, despite the drought conditions."

"I noticed the same results with the roses in my own garden", he continued. "I fed our roses in September/October and again after the rains in February". The lushness and dark healthy colour of their foliage was fantastic, not to mention the amazing amounts of blooms. We are honestly able to recommend this product to our customers, knowing that they will get great results, and when you work out that the 10kg buckets feed 100 roses, it is actually great value for a premium product."



**NEUTROG**  
FERTILISERS  
The Experts' Choice

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