



**Spring 2007**

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**H**ow time flies... The last two years have been very busy for us. In the summer of 2005 we made the decision to install a Biomass heating system. This was the biggest project we have tackled to date and it was no easy task. We worked through the fall of 2005 and throughout the winter, but we had to break for spring 2006. We got the system operating in August of 2006. Because of the new system we decided to heat for an extended period in order to make sure it was operating properly. The consequence of that is an extra stock of perennials that we propagated and

overwintered. The system is now operational and has reduced our oil consumption to less than 5% of previous levels.

*"What this country needs is dirtier fingernails and cleaner minds."- Wil Rogers*

**I**n a natural setting, the soil is teaming with different bacteria and fungus that break down old plant and animal material. There are many that form mutually beneficial relationships with the plant roots. The fungus get food given off by the plant roots and both fight off disease organisms and provide the plant with hard to come by nutrients. For years the goal in the greenhouse industry has been to make

everything sterile. The way to fight root and leaf disease was to apply lots of chemicals. The theory was exclusion and fight like hell to keep everything that way. Recently beneficial fungus have been added to commercial soil mixes with wonderful results. This mind set is



somewhat different. It recognizes the reality that living organisms are complex and can develop relationships with other organisms that are mutually beneficial. In fact it is very difficult to maintain a sterile environment so why not try to give the good guys a leg up? The result? The good guys will help you to maintain a healthy environment for the plants even in the presence of the bad guys. We have found that spraying the same organisms on the plants in cloudy humid weather has resulted in a huge drop in leaf problems. We have taken it one step further this year. Brian has been spraying the plants with a compost tea. So far we like what we see.

*"You know you are a real gardener when you think compost is a fascinating subject."*  
- Anon



## New for 2007. "Own Root Roses"

. All our rose bushes are grown from cuttings on their own root stock. This is not a very radical idea but the majority of roses now are grown as grafts on an alternative rootstock. So why should you care? These roses will never sucker and go wild. All the shoots that come from the rootstock will be true to the variety that you purchased. Since there is no graft the roses tend to be hardier (ie no danger of the graft being killed). We have made a selection of roses that have the best hardiness



and disease resistance available

*"There are many tired gardeners but I've seldom met old gardeners. I know many elderly gardeners but the majority is young at heart. Gardening simply does not allow one to be mentally old, because too many hopes and dreams are yet to be realized. The one absolute of gardeners is faith. Regardless of how bad past gardens have been, every gardener believes that next year's will be better. It is easy to age when there is nothing to believe in, nothing to hope for; gardeners, however, simply refuse to grow up. Thomas Jefferson said once, 'Though an old man, I am but a young gardener'."*  
-Allan Armitage

**We are getting confused.** We have offered a seniors discount of 10% on Wednesdays. It is getting harder and harder to tell who the

seniors are and our staff are afraid to ask for it; "Listen sonny I haven't been asked for it since I was 18 and....." you get the picture. Anyway in the interest of the safety and mental health of our employees we are offering the Wednesday seniors discount to anyone over the age of 5. We apologise in advance to all those 5 and under but we are hoping that the sandbox will be compensation enough

"We learn from our gardens to deal with the most urgent question of the time: How much is enough?"

- Wendell Berry

## Soil amendments;

We have a full selection of soil amendments this year at our Odessa location. Included will be several amendments that will act to increase the biological activity in the soil. What does this mean? They will help

your soil to grow the beneficial organisms that will in turn enhance the growth of your plants.

*"Grey are all theories and green alone life's golden tree"* -Goethe



**N**ew for 2007 Fruit trees. We have a selection of beautiful fruit trees. You can choose from several varieties of Apples, Plums, Cherries and Pears. We have tried to choose varieties that are hardy for this area and that have good disease resistance. An example would be Liberty Apples; high resistance to all common apple diseases, scab, fire blight, rust and mildew. In addition to the trees we will also have

Sambucus (elderberry) and strawberries

*"When your work speaks for itself, don't interrupt."*

- Henry J. Kaiser

## Gardening and Global

warming; The hard truth is we haven't a clue what the weather will do. There are however some universal truths of gardening that help a garden through extremes of weather. Number one and the most important, is to have lots of organic matter in your soil. It has the contradictory benefits of holding onto moisture when it is dry and helping the soil drain when it is wet. Your plants will thank you. One hot dry summer Ruth added compost to 75% of her flower beds before she ran out of time. During a two week hot dry spell when we were gone on holidays the treated area thrived and the other died.



Are you in awe of spring? Do you wonder how it is that each year the leaves continue to come out on that maple tree in the back yard? Do you want to participate in the magic of spring? Then please read this and we will help you to become a little bit closer to the nature that surrounds you.



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