

# What to Do With Small Canes on Roses

By W. D. Holley and Roger Farmer

Farmer has shown that blind wood on roses is best left alone (C.F.G.A. Bul. 27). Hubbard found that few of the small canes on roses break back from a soft pinch (C.F.G.A. Bul. 24), and that each succeeding flower produced by a cane is smaller in diameter than the previous one (C.F.G.A. Bul. 33). We know that small canes produce short flowers, if they flower at all.

After pruning two benches of Better Times roses in 1952 they were divided into 6 plots each and three methods of cutting the flowers from the small canes were employed. In this case, a small cane was arbitrarily set at 1/8 inch in diameter or smaller. The three methods follow:

- 1) Cut above the second 5-leaflet eye.
- 2) Undercut or cut below the origin of flower.

- 3) Remove small cane completely with rose.

All other flowers were cut above the second 5-leaflet eye. No effort was made to remove blind wood from the plants. Each treatment was replicated at random 4 times within the 2 benches and involved 48 plants. The cut was graded from July 20, 1952 to May 9, 1953.

Table 1. Production and quality from 3 methods of cutting roses from small canes

Treat- ment	Works	9"	12"	15"	18" & up	Total
1	90	185	276	345	383	1279
2	110	154	239	344	359	1206
3	80	157	248	353	384	1222

Neither total production nor quality were statistically different. Method 1 produced a few more flowers but these flowers were in the shorter grades.

In rejuvenating a rose plant after pruning, all canes (large and small) should be soft-pinched once. After that initial pinching the larger canes become the "permanent" producing structure of

the plant and small canes apparently contribute little except low grade flowers.

These data indicate that the method of cutting flowers from small canes has little effect on total production or quality. The quality production comes from canes larger than 1/8 inch in diameter.

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