

Transporting Roses to a Rose Show

By Kathy Noble from her article
'A Rose Transportation System,'
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If you are planning to attend a rose show, the challenge will be to have your roses arrive at the show in good condition. This will require keeping the blooms cool to slow the aging process, maintaining bloom substance (moisture content), and preventing physical damage to the bloom, stem and foliage.

To ensure that their roses are protected against damage and are kept cool, rosarians use many techniques to transport roses to a rose show. Generally, the farther one has to travel to a show, the more protection and cooling the roses need.

To bring roses to a local show, it may only be necessary to carefully place the roses in a bucket or two. To minimize the tangling of leaves and stems, carefully put the roses, one at a time, into a bucket. Be systematic about this, placing them clockwise starting at 12 o'clock, and removing them moving counterclockwise from 11 o'clock. Remove them only once - at the show. A better method is to wrap each rose in a cone made of freezer paper with the waxed surface of the paper on the inside of the cone, and then place the wrapped roses in a bucket.

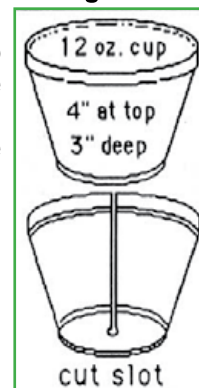
For longer trips to rose shows, rosarians use insulated boxes that have ice packs to cool the roses during transit. In one type of homemade box, roses are stored vertically in cylinders made of a plastic litre soda bottle and freezer paper. An inch of water is placed in the cylinder before each stem is carefully stuffed into it. This method works well for travel by automobile.

The same cutting, storage, and transportation techniques work for all types of roses. Of course, the containers are selected in proportion to the size of the roses.

You will need:

- A 12 oz. Styrofoam cup to cover each bloom. The cup should be 4 inches in diameter at the top, tapering to 2½ inches at the bottom, and 3 inches deep.
- A clear polyvinyl tube to encase each stem and its foliage. The tube should be 3½ inches in diameter at the top, tapering to 1 inch at the bottom, and 12 inches long.
- Enough water tubes for the number of roses that are being taken to the show. Use tubes that are 3 inches long and ½ inch in diameter.
- Plastic wrap, rubber bands and mending tape.

Figure 1



Take each Styrofoam cup and cut a slot from the centre to one edge of the bottom, and then up the side to the top (Figure 1).

Twist open the cup and slide it around the bloom so that the peduncle rests on the centre of the slot (Figure 2).

Figure 2

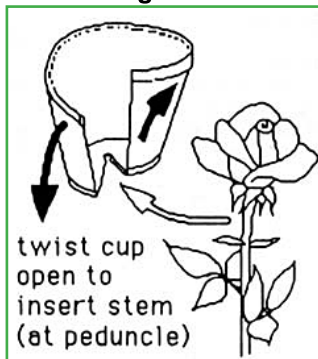
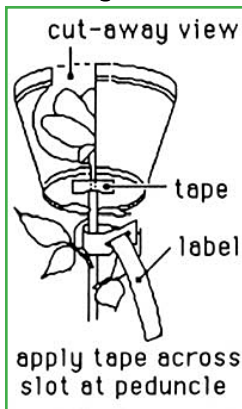


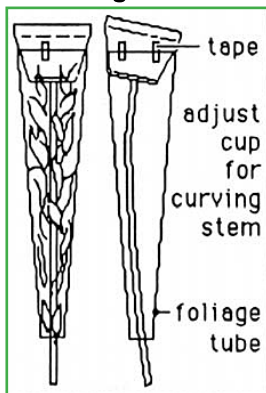
Figure 3



To keep the cup from sliding up and down on the peduncle, place a piece of mending tape on the outside of the cup, against the peduncle and across the slot on the bottom (Figure 3).

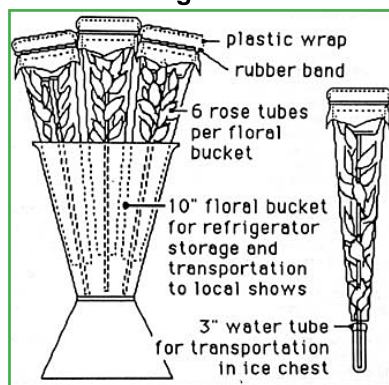
Cut the foliage tube so that when the tube is seated against the Styrofoam cup 3 to 4 inches of stem protrudes from the bottom of the tube (see Figure 4). The cup can be angled inside the foliage tube so that the petals will not touch the bottom or sides of the tube (Figure 4).

Figure 4



Finally, cover the cup with plastic wrap and secured with a rubber band (Figure 5).

Figure 5

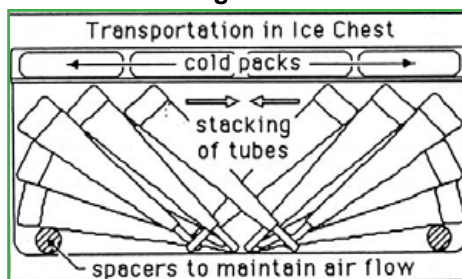


Store the roses in the refrigerator, six to a 10 inch floral bucket, until transportation time (Figure 5). The roses can be taken to a local show directly in the bucket.

To transport the roses longer distances, the roses can be placed in a cooler in which some "blue ice" has been mounted on the lid. First re-cut each stem under water and place into a 3 inch water tube (Figure 5).

Pack the longest stems first. The combination of Styrofoam cup taped to the foliage tube had a little give, making the roses easy to stack, and providing plenty of protection from crushing.

Figure 6



The taper of the foliage tubes allows the stems to be packed in quite compactly, and the packing pattern leaves a hollow in the middle of the cooler (see Figure 6). ☺