

Hybridizing for Fun

By Gail Trimble

Labels and Records

As soon as you apply pollen, it is essential to label the cross if you want to remember the parents. The seed parent is always listed first followed by the pollen parent. It is also helpful to list the date of pollination, as some hips do not change color as they mature.



There are many different kinds of labels available – plastic, vinyl, and metal are represented in the photo below. Be sure to use a pencil or waterproof pen.



You can list just the pollen parent on the label after pollinating, but remember to add the name of the seed parent when removing the hip from the plant.

Record keeping is very helpful. Without records, you will probably not remember which crosses resulted in germinations, which combination gave disease resistant seedlings, or which seedlings to keep. There are many ways to keep records, but assigning numbers will be quicker to write. Some hybridizers use the first few letters of both parents, followed by a number. For instance, the third seedling of a cross in 2004 of Lynn Anderson x Baby Love might be labeled: LyBa0403. Others prefer to use just numbers - the same cross mentioned above could be: 04-05-03. In this case, the year of hybridizing is first, followed by the cross number, and then the seedling number.

After you have completed your pollinations, if you have decided to keep records you can enter them in either a notebook or computer (or both!). Some things you might want to track are: cross number, name of seed parent, pollen parent, number of crosses made with that combination, number of hips that matured, number of seeds from those hips, and the number of seedlings that resulted.

Cross #	Seed Parent	Pollen Parent	Remain Hips	Seeds	Notes
04-167	Sexy Rexy	Honey Bouquet	7	3	
04-170	Sexy Rexy	Scarlet Moss	1	1	
04-171	Sexy Rexy	Pearce	1		
04-172	Sexy Rexy	Cardinal Humr.	3	3	
04-173	Sexy Rexy	Gold Medal	11	7	50
04-174	Sexy Rexy	Behold	1	1	
04-175	Sexy Rexy	Lynn Anderson	6		
04-176	Sexy Rexy	Alfissimo	3		
04-177	Sexy Rexy	Neptune	3	2	25
04-178	Sexy Rexy	Sepia Baby	2	2	
04-179	Sexy Rexy	Little Darling	1	1	
04-180	Sexy Rexy	Sentimental	3	1	6
04-181	Sexy Rexy	Hot Cocoa	2		

You will find that you will refer back to these records very often, as many crosses will result in few or no germinations. It is a sad fact that while many roses set hips; relatively few produce seeds that will germinate reliably.

A second set of records should be kept for the seedlings. Information such as the color and form of the bloom, number of petals, disease, fragrance, vigor, and number of blooms produced are essential for deciding whether or not to keep the seedling later in the season. You will find that some seedlings increase the number of their petals and even change color.