

# Growing with Jack

...a monthly newsletter from Jack Peters

Dear Gardener:

Welcome to the Jack's Classic® monthly newsletter. The purpose of my newsletter is to pass on timely tips on how to get the most from your plants using good plant nutrition.

Please send your topic suggestions, questions or comments via email to [info@jrpeters.com](mailto:info@jrpeters.com).

Happy Planting!

**Jack**

=====

## July 2004

Temperatures have been moderate here in the Northeast and there haven't been any watering restrictions to speak of. The growing conditions are very favorable and the plant materials are responding well to continued fertilizer applications. With rising temperatures and more frequent watering there are a few things to watch for. The most important thing to remember is NOT to cut back on your fertilizer applications. You will not burn your plants with applications made at our normal rates. This is very important especially on your hanging baskets where they will most likely be watered every day. I would be feeding the baskets weekly with "The Dynamic Duo" combination of 1 Tablespoon of All Purpose 20-20-20 and 1 Tablespoon of Blossom Booster 10-30-20 in a 2-gallon watering can.

- Heavy feeders like geraniums, petunias, calibrachoa and other plant materials in baskets are heavy feeders. If you see the oldest leaves turning light green or yellowing, they most likely will need more fertilizer. Give them a feed of the Jack's All Purpose 20-20-20 at 1 Tablespoon per gallon with an additional ½ teaspoon of Epsom Salts added. You can resume giving them "The Dynamic Duo" combination when they color up.

## You Asked...

***We have had a number of questions regarding Hydrangeas so I felt it was appropriate to pass a few tips along about them.***

- Hydrangeas are an interesting plant material in that they will change color in response to the soil environment they are in. The most effective way to encourage a particular color is to treat the soil so there is a long lasting effect on the pH. Your first step would be to take a soil sample to find out where the pH is. From there you would treat the soil bed to get the results you want. The best time to do this is before you plant the hydrangea. If they are already planted, you will have to treat the soil before, during and after to achieve the effect you want.

To keep Hydrangeas Blue you need to reduce the pH in the soil and keep it acidic. Aluminum Sulfate applied to the root zone at about 1 lb.100 sq. ft. will help to keep the pH down. Using acidic fertilizers like our Jack's Acid Special 17-6-6 will also provide the right nutrient balance to keep them blue. Think of them like azaleas with blue flowers.

To keep Hydrangeas White or Pink you do the opposite. You want to have the pH closer to neutral (pH 7) to encourage the plants to produce the white or pink flowers. If your soil is acidic you may have to add some limestone to the soil to bring the pH up to encourage the white or pink color. I like to use "The Dynamic Duo" combination in this situation to provide nutrients that are just slightly acidic.

---

To remove your name from our Growing with Jack's newsletter click here [info@jrpeters.com](mailto:info@jrpeters.com) or call toll free 1-866-522-5752, ext. 22. Visit our website at [www.jrpeters.com](http://www.jrpeters.com).

**J.R. PETERS, INC., 6656 GRANT WAY, ALLENTOWN, PA 18106**

*...industry leaders providing research, testing and manufacturing since 1947.*