Bell County Master Gardeners  
Tip of the Week  
By Gary Slanga  
“Earthkind, Part One”

There is a new concept in landscape planting that should become popular with Central Texans very soon. Associated with this concept is a group of plants that will be known by their Trademark name of EarthKind™. This is the first of a three part series that will explain EarthKind™ landscaping and planting.

EarthKind™ is a federally registered trademark of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, and Texas A&M University. This concept is based on two principals: first, the plants being considered must be care free and easy to grow using no fertilizers or pruning, and very little watering; second, the plants must be disease resistant and no chemicals, pesticides or fungicides are needed to grow them.

The fact that NO chemicals are needed and that you conserve water is what makes them EarthKind™. Currently the only plants designated as EarthKind™ are a series of roses, but the concept will be soon extended to a whole series of other landscape plants. Why did A&M start with roses? Most gardeners consider them very difficult and time consuming to grow, especially the type of hybrid tea roses that you find in florist shops. A&M started with roses because of the difficulties in growing them; now you and I can now grow beautiful roses to be proud of. What's more, these roses will actually smell like the roses in our memories, something that is missing from florist shop roses.

EarthKind™ roses can be grown in landscapes, in containers on the patio or in large rose gardens. What is an EarthKind™ rose? How do we know if a rose deserves to be called EarthKind™? We will address that subject in the next article in the EarthKind™ Series.

The Bell County Master Gardeners will present an Earthkind Landscaping seminar at the Home and Garden Show on the 27th of Feb. at 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. Be sure to attend to learn more. Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact ask.bcmga@gmail.com