

## 2009 AWARD OF MERIT WINNER

### What's In a Name? by Charlotte Owendyk, Consulting Rosarian

Don't you just hate it when you visit a garden and find some irresistible rose and you want to know the name so you can get one for your garden BUT there is **NO** nametag anywhere to be found! And in my own garden I want to be sure of the names of all my roses—not just my favorites. It is especially useful in winter when I use the shovel to prune. Lastly, to be perfectly honest, I have issues at times recalling names of all the plants I have so nametags are a help.

A quick web search found a variety of plant labels, in a range of designs and styles as well as cost which are now available for home gardeners. The style you select should depend both on your goals and personal taste. Do you want to label just your roses or do you have other plants you would like to label?

We are all familiar with those labels that are used by the nursery industry or in a propagating bed or cold frame. Strictly functional they are usually made of some inexpensive plastic or wood. Whereas those out in the garden proper may be showy or discreet, depending on the individual gardener's desires, pocket-book or inventiveness. Since I really don't have much inventiveness—some people paint the names of the roses on rocks or do other crafty things—but I don't have the time to do that for 250 plus roses!

Many rose gardeners prefer their labels in the ground rather than on the plant. Labels stuck in the ground get around the girdling issue; however, they can get lost or displaced, and if you move the plant, you need to be sure to transplant the label, too.

Another consideration is durability and the amount of information you want place on the tag beyond the name of the plant, such as type of rose, hybridizer, year introduced, source, date of planting, etc. I want my label to last a reasonable amount of time and the galvanized steel wire markers with zinc label bases work the best for me. They are economical, durable and allow me to put lots of information on the marker.

However, I will cover several different options. I have listed the web addresses so you can check out the in-

formation yourself and determine what the best value is for you.

One of the places to check out the wide range of different styles of labels that are available can be found at Orion Industries web page. They have metal, wood, plastic, and terracotta markers.



Lee Valley has a selection of different markers ranging from two types of stoneware labels, copper and zinc plant labels, plastic labels, Seed Packet Stakes, and even Make Your Own Marker Stones Kit.

On the other hand, Plantid just carries Plant Identification Markers which are dark green, nine-inch, polypropylene mountings that surround a vinyl insert. Both mounting and insert are weather resistant. Three collections of preprinted labels—herbs, vegetables, and perennials—as well as blank inserts for making your own labels.

Popular plant markers are copper and/or zinc labels with steel stakes found in a wide variety of sizes and styles. Practical and attractive in a no-nonsense sort of way, these labels

## Get Ready to Make Labels for your New Roses

are a favorite of many rosarians. Bosmere, Orion, Paw Paw Everlast, and EON are companies that carry this type of label and stake.

The vertically oriented Everlast and the horizontal EON labels have rounded edges, while Orion and Paw Paw's horizontal zinc labels are sharp-edged and tend to bend a little more easily under duress. The disadvantage of vertical labels, of course, is that they are more difficult to read than the horizontal style.

Depending on the placement of the plant marker, it can either be inconspicuous or not. Another boon to this type of label is the fact that the information on the label can be handwritten, generated by your own computer or done by a company that specializes in labels.

Many rosarians (like Baldo who has thousands of labels or I because I wanted to have control of the information on my labels) print out labels on our laser printers at home. We use address labels purchased from any office supply store. This requires some familiarity with producing address labels.

Or, there is the option of using Orion's Computer-Imprintable Labels. Using Orion's software, you can print your own labels, which then be covered with protective plastic and insert them into durable metal stakes. There is always the option of purchasing a label maker.

### Label Companies

However, there is always the option of having a company print your plant list on the labels. The company, Garden Fonts, will print your labels on UV-resistant polyester to peel and stick onto

metal markers.

The website [Gardenlabels4you.com](http://Gardenlabels4you.com) also offers to print your labels which can feature up to three lines of information with your choice of typeface. The company allows you to specify the information that is particular to your garden needs. When you receive your labels, all you have to do is just peel off the protective backing and press into place on a marker.

Both of the above label companies offer the option of ordering the markers with the labels already attached, so all you need to do is take them right out of the box and place them in the garden.

Another company, Potting Solutions, specializes in Rose Markers and Labels that are permanent AND have bright cheerful background colors. The color of the marker is similar to the flower color. The markers have the type of rose, the year it was hybridized, the country where it was developed and any major awards such as the All-American Rose Society, AARS, award.

The company claims that these colorful markers last for years because they are made from sun and water resistant ink on water-proof plastic paper that is covered with a clear lens of plastic for double protection. The tag can be mounted on a 10 inch tall rust resistant Zinc coated metal stake. This company also gives you the option of just purchasing the label or the whole assembly.

Personally, I have not tried these label companies, but they may be just the ticket if you don't have too many roses or not very computer savvy.



From Lee Valley



From PLantid



From Garden Label Maker



From Potting Solutions

## Choosing Plant Labels

When I first started to growing roses , I saw an ad for Harlane's nametag in the American Rose Magazine. I still have many of their nametags throughout my garden. The most frequently asked question during the garden tour was where I got these name-tags. The label which only has the name of the rose are easy to read. The label does not fade but over-time I have found that they are beginning to curl or and snap.



In summary, there are a lot of products out there. Since I have not ordered items from all the vendors I have mentioned, except for Paw Paw Everlast, Harlane and Orion,

I can not vouch for their product or quality of service. Now we all know that you are going to buy new roses at the February auction, so get ready to label all your roses this year!



## Sources

For more information about any of the products mentioned contact the manufacturers below.

**Bosmere Inc** Concord N.C. 28026 (704) 784 1608

<http://www.bosmere.com/>

**EON Industries, Inc.**, Liberty Center, OH. (419) 533-4961.

[www.eonindustries.com](http://www.eonindustries.com).

**Garden Fonts**, Castine, ME. (207) 326-9413.

[www.gardenfonts.com](http://www.gardenfonts.com).

**Garden Labels 4 you**

[gardenlabels4you.com/](http://gardenlabels4you.com/)

**Garden Label Maker** is a division of Image Supply  
1309 N. Market Blvd, Suite 140  
Sacramento, CA 95834

<http://www.gardenlabelmaker.com/>

**Lee Valley Tools Ltd.** Ogdensburg, NY 13669 1-800-871-8158

<http://www.leevalley.com/>

**MetalGardenMarkers** Bozeman, Mt 597181-800-514-8435

<http://www.metalgardenmarkers.com/>

**Orion Industries** Cloverdale, CA 95425 (707) 529-8707

[www.gardenmarker.com](http://www.gardenmarker.com)

**Paw Paw Everlast Label Co.**, Paw Paw, MI.

[www.everlastlabel.com](http://www.everlastlabel.com).