

WINNERS CIRCLE

TRIALED FOR THEIR STRENGTH AND
BEAUTY, THESE HONORED VARIETIES
SHOULD FIND THEIR WAY INTO
YOUR LINEUP.

Compiled by Jasmina Dolce

FLEUROSELECT

1) Gaura 'Sparkle White' (Kieft Seed).

This variety is a great summer performer that adds a touch of airiness to a border. This first-year flowering perennial presents early and flowers uniformly. Judges loved it for its garden performance and strong branching habit. It grows best in full sun and can survive lengthy periods of drought.

2) Geranium 'Pinto Premium White to Rose' (Syngenta Flowers). This geranium impressed judges with its showy flowers and foliage. It flowers very early, is compact and displays a good growing habit. The large flowers on shorter stems are easy to ship and hold up better at retail.

3) Penstemon 'Carillo Red' (PanAmerican Seed). This variety stands out in the front of a perennial border or in more formal bedding style gardening. It needs a well-drained, moderately fertile soil and a sunny spot. Its strong red color and high floridity on deep-green shiny leaves will make it easy to sell in an impulse market setting.

4) Petunia 'SweetSunshine Provence' (Selecta). Fleuroselect judges were impressed with this variety's vigor and color shading, citing it as a strong, versatile performer and an excellent addition to the current range of semitrailing, double-flowered petunias. It thrives in a temperate climate and loves the sun.

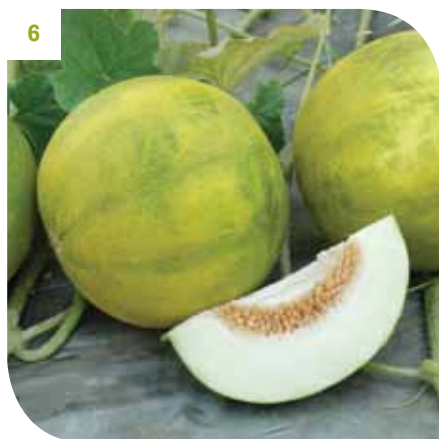
5) Zinnia 'Profusion Double Hot Cherry' (Sakata). This vibrant award winner, 'Profusion Double Hot Cherry', scored well in innovation and overall appearance. Judges were impressed by this annual's intense non-fading color and its outstanding garden performance. Profusion zinnias stand out for heat and humidity tolerance, disease resistance, easy maintenance and compact growth.

6) Zinnia 'Zahara Sunburst' (PanAmerican Seed). Flowers on this plant burst open gold, followed by the appearance of a red strip down the center of each petal. Cold night temperatures will thicken the stripe; warm nights and the use of PGRs will diminish it. 'Zahara Sunburst' is a great addition to spring-summer bedding programs as it is highly suitable for packs and small pots.

Choosing which crops to add to your production each year involves some risk. Growing exceptional plants is critical to your business and reputation, and the success of your plants relies on various factors such as tolerance to weather, maintenance requirements, use of PGRs, appearance at maturity, and so on.

It can be difficult to predict which plants will be successful for you and your customers. So in an effort to help you plan what to grow, *GPN* puts together a list of the year's winning varieties. Read on to learn more about how these award-winning varieties performed in trials and impressed judges in the United States and abroad.





ALL-AMERICA SELECTIONS

1) Canna 'South Pacific Scarlet' (American Takii). Grown from seed, this variety is compact in habit and well suited for both landscape and container use. It prefers warm and humid conditions over 77° F. 'South Pacific Scarlet' is more vigorous, more uniform and has more basal branching than canna 'Tropical Red'.

2) Echinacea 'Cheyenne Spirit' (Kieft Seed). This stunning first-year flowering echinacea produces a delightful mix of flower colors from rich purple, pink, red and orange tones to lighter yellows, creams and white. It doesn't require a lot of water and offers a wide range of uses from the perennial border, in a mass

landscape planting, in a butterfly garden or as a cut flower.

3) Geranium 'Pinto Premium White to Rose' (Syngenta Flowers). This two-time winner boasts a unique ombre-like flower coloration and numerous long-lasting 5-inch blooms. Petals start out white and deepen to rose-pink as flowers mature, giving an attractive bicolor effect. Dense, well-branched plants sport deep-green leaves with darker zones that contrast nicely with the light-colored flowers.

4) Zinnia 'Profusion Double Deep Salmon' (Sakata). This zinnia features intensely vibrant, pink-orange flowers with double petals. Like other Profusion zinnias, it continuously flowers from spring through frost and is easy to grow. It is self cleaning, disease resistant and grows well in a range of climates, including areas with

high night temperatures. The flowers can grow 2½ to 3 inches in diameter.

5) Zinnia 'Profusion Double Hot Cherry' (Sakata). Another two-time winner, this zinnia features rich rose, double-petaled blooms that flower continuously from spring through frost. The bright color does not fade, even under high temperatures. Like all Profusion varieties, it is self cleaning, disease resistant and grows well in a range of climates. Plants grow 8 to 14 inches tall and 24 inches wide.

6) Melon 'Melemon' (Known-You Seed Co.). The earliness, high yield on strong plants and superior taste all contributed to this melon becoming an AAS winner. Judges related the taste of this melon to honeydew, but with a surprising tanginess. A uniform fruit shape makes it perfect for market growers as well as home gardeners.

7) Tomato 'Jasper' (Johnny's Selected Seeds). Excellent taste, a long harvest window and outstanding performance in the trials contribute to this tomato's success. Judges liked the texture and sweetness of the tomato as well as the uniformity of the fruits that grow on vigorous, healthy plants.

8) Watermelon 'Harvest Moon' (Seeds by Design/K&B Development). This first-ever hybrid, triploid seedless watermelon is an improvement of 'Moon and Stars'. It features healthy, shorter vines that produce medium-sized fruits and sweet, crisp pinkish-red flesh.

AMERICAN HOSTA GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Hosta 'Rainforest Sunrise' (Winterberry Farms/Anderson 2003). A sport of 'Maui Buttercup', this hosta features gold leaves with a nice dark-green margin. It is nicely corrugated even at a young age. The glossy cupped leaves also have a thick substance. Pale lavender flowers appear in early summer.



PERENNIAL PLANT ASSOCIATION

Polygonatum odoratum 'Variegatum'. The 2013 Perennial Plant of the Year is an all-season perennial with greenish-white flowers in late spring and variegated foliage throughout the growing season. The foliage turns yellow in the fall and grows well in moist soil in partial to full shade. This variety is hardy to Zones 3 to 8.



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VARIETY INFORMATION

ASSOCIATION OF SPECIALTY CUT FLOWERS GROWERS

- 1) **Ranunculus 'Super Green'**. "Funky" and "avant garde" describe this unusual cultivar, which combines the bright, cheery colors of traditional ranunculus with green, leafy inner petals. 'Super Green' is available as a mix or in individual colors. Flowers are very sturdy and hold up extremely well.
- 2) **Stock 'Katz Cherry Blossom' (PanAmerican Seed)**. From a series named for PanAmerican Seed product manager Philip Katz, this cultivar was noted by growers for its uniform flowers and consistent stem length. Its improved heat tolerance and fast crop time allow it to be grown earlier and later in the season.
- 3) **Symphoricarpos 'Amethyst'**. This native plant produces small white flowers in summer, and masses of hot-pink berries that ripen into the fall. It's relatively easy to cultivate as a cut flower crop, with fruiting stems as long as 60 inches.



AMERICAN GARDEN AWARD

- 4) **Begonia 'Santa Cruz Sunset' (Benary)**. This first place winner boasts an abundance of scarlet-orange blooms. Its elegant cascading form is perfect for hanging baskets, urns or mass plants in the garden. It is heat, drought and rain tolerant and thrives in full sun to shade.
- 5) **Gazania 'Big Kiss White Flame' (Syngenta Flowers)**. Coming in second, 'Big Kiss White Flame' has huge white- and rose-striped flowers that cover full, bushy plants. This carefree, heat-loving and drought-tolerant annual loves the sun and thrives in tough conditions all summer long.
- 6) **Petunia 'Surfinia Deep Red' (Suntory Flowers)**. In third place, this is a true deep-red petunia gardeners will love. For 20 years, Surfinia has been a top-selling vegetative petunia series, offering superior garden performance with no pinching or pruning needed. Deep Red can be used in container gardens or in the landscape from spring through fall.

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