

2. TRIO CONFETTI GARDEN EMPRESS PATRIOT SUN

Dümmen Orange

The verbena Empress Sun Compact series is new for 2020 and is comprised of three colors: Violet, Red and White. This interspecific series has the attributes of the original Empress Sun series including heat tolerance, mildew resistance and minimal flower cycling. The compact series offers the grower outstanding application in small containers, combinations and baskets.

3. YELLOW HONEY

Ball FloraPlant

This combo is not a part of the MixMaster recipes but was created to show the the versatility of this new cuphea 'Honeybells' in basket programs. I highlighted the excellent performance of this variety in my June article on the Costa Farms trial. This is a standalone interspecific cuphea with vigor, odema resistance, heat tolerance,

floriferousness and unique tubular bicolor flowers. It flowered in Florida with no extended lighting week 5, and will flower in California by week 8 and week 15 in the northern regions. It is mixed with the early-blooming

calibrachoa 'Cabaret Golden Yellow' to create a tropical look.

4. TRIXI DUO BRASS BAND

Selecta One

This mono combination of calibrachoa 'Neo Deep Yellow'

and calibrachoa 'Neo Vampire' is not new to the program but is a top seller for good reason. The two primary colors create a warm and uniformly rounded basket with excellent timing and flower coverage. The calibrachoa Neo



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Colorful COMBINATION BASKETS

These mixes were clear standouts during the 2019 Southern Plant Trial tour.



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Metrolina Greenhouses, in Huntersville, North Carolina, one of the three trial sites on the Southern tour in June, which included Young's Plant Farm and the University of Georgia, displayed an extensive sun basket collection consisting of over 220 current and new designer mixes from multiple breeders. The recipes were transplanted week 13, grown in 13½-inch baskets, and moved from the greenhouse to the outdoor display area week 16.

It was challenging to select some of my favorites. I based the recipes I chose on the attributes of uniformity, timing, compatible growth habit, balance, color scheme and floriferousness. I observed the baskets up close and from a distance to get a perspective on vibrancy and potential consumer appeal.

1. AMERICAN RHYTHM

Proven Winners

This 2020 combination introduction includes verbena 'Superbena Whiteout', angelonia 'Angelface Cascade Blue' and verbena 'Superbena Red'. The two series provide attributes necessary for summer performance including heat tolerance, vigor and perpetual flowering. The angelonia Cascade series is comprised of Blue, Pink and White, and manifests a cascading habit that can be used in full sun exposures. The verbena Superbena line expanded for 2019 with the addition of Raspberry, Red, Scarlet Star and Whiteout. The size and brightness of the five-lobed corollas and the plant vigor is comparable to the many competitive series in the market place.



series, comprised of 17 unique and semi-trailing colors, works well in Trixi combos. Vampire, one of the best red calibrachas in the market, is an integral component in multiple recipes.

5. KWIK KOMBO WALK OF STARS

Syngenta Flowers

This early season multi-species recipe is comprised of petunia 'Dekko Red', verbena 'Lanai Compact Red Star', and calibrachoa 'Callie White'. It was one of the most balanced compositions in the basket trial with vitality, intense colors and a uniform growth habit. There are 30 early-season Kwik Kombos for 2020 to choose from, comprising a wide range of Syngenta vegetative annuals.

6. BENARY PLUS COMBINATION

Benary and Benary+

This was a combination that Benary created for the trial from their 2020 seed and vegetative program. The analogous color combination with a focus on rose and lavender was distinctive. The components were the vegetative verbena 'Samira Rose' and seed varieties petunia 'Success 360 Purple Vein' and lobularia 'Wonderland Pink'. I highlighted the verbena Samira series in an article earlier this year and includes 14 varieties comprised of stars and solid colors. The petunia Success grandifloras are comprised of 13 early, uniform and vigorous colors. The lobularia series consists of six



assorted colors. This basket demonstrated the potential and utilization of seed and vegetative varieties in mixed containers.

7. TRIXI RASPBERRY SORBET

Selecta One

This is a new Trixi combination for 2020. The components of this recipe are calibrachoa 'MiniFamous Neo White', petunia 'Starlet Magenta Star' and verbena 'Blues Magenta+Eye'. This basket was audacious and extremely colorful with the vibrant shades of magenta creating a brightness that will attract retail attention.

8. BLIND LOVE

Proven Winners

This new recipe combines petunia 'Supertunia Lovie Dovie', petunia 'Supertunia Royale Magenta' and verbena 'Superbena



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Whiteout'. The solid color of the Royale Magenta, the striking bicolor flowers of Lovie Dovie, and the luminosity of the the white verbena created a warm and balanced composition.

9. MIXMASTER TART DECO

Ball FloraPlant

This mono-species recipe, comprised of petunia ColorRush Blue and Pink, was extremely vigorous and floriferous. This is the most vigorous petunia series from Ball FloraPlant, and the series has demonstrated outstanding heat tolerance and summer performance since its inception. Three new colors were introduced for 2020: Merlot Star, Purple, and Watermelon Red. We have seen increased interest in vigorous, large flowering and durable petunias for landscapes and large baskets, and this series is an extremely viable option for the industry.

10. TRIXI HOTTER THAN YOU PINK

Selecta One

The Headliner petunia series — consisting of 21 assorted stars, solids, rimmed and speckled varieties — is one of the



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most diverse in the market. The petunias offer earliness, a mounded habit and large flowers. This Trixi, comprised of Headliner Lipstick, Pink Vein, and White manifested a manageable growth habit, exceptional timing, high impact and matched vigor.

11. TRIXI WHO KNEW ORLEANS

Selecta One

The warm colors of calibrachoa 'MiniFamous Uno Yellow+Red Vein', petunia 'Headliner Red' and verbena 'Lascar Mango Orange' were vivacious and stunning in the trial. This is one of the best-selling Trixis in the portfolio and has wide regional adaptability. Each variety in the recipe brings important attributes to the forefront. Uno Yellow+Red Vein has been a strong performer in trials and in retail programs the past few seasons. 'Lascar Mango Orange' offers one of the most unique orange colors in the industry. Combining these varieties with 'Headliner Red' provides eye popping color and dramatic contrast.

12. HOT AND COOL COMBINATION

Westflowers

Westflowers does not offer designer mixes of their vegetative portfolio but many of the varieties including the Crazytunia and Hells petunias are ubiquitous in quarts, mixed containers and baskets in wholesale and retail programs. I chose the name for this combination because of the stunning contrasting colors of the components. Petunia 'Crazytunia Cosmic Purple' was introduced for 2019 and was a significant element in many production programs throughout the country. The purple flowers with a magenta rim were vivid and brilliant and, combined with the vibrant neon coral flowers of petunia 'Hell's Flamin' Rose' and the lysimachia 'Karat' from the FanciFiller accent program, provided a dramatic contrasting combination.





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13. CONFETTI GARDEN HAWAIIAN FRUIT BOWL

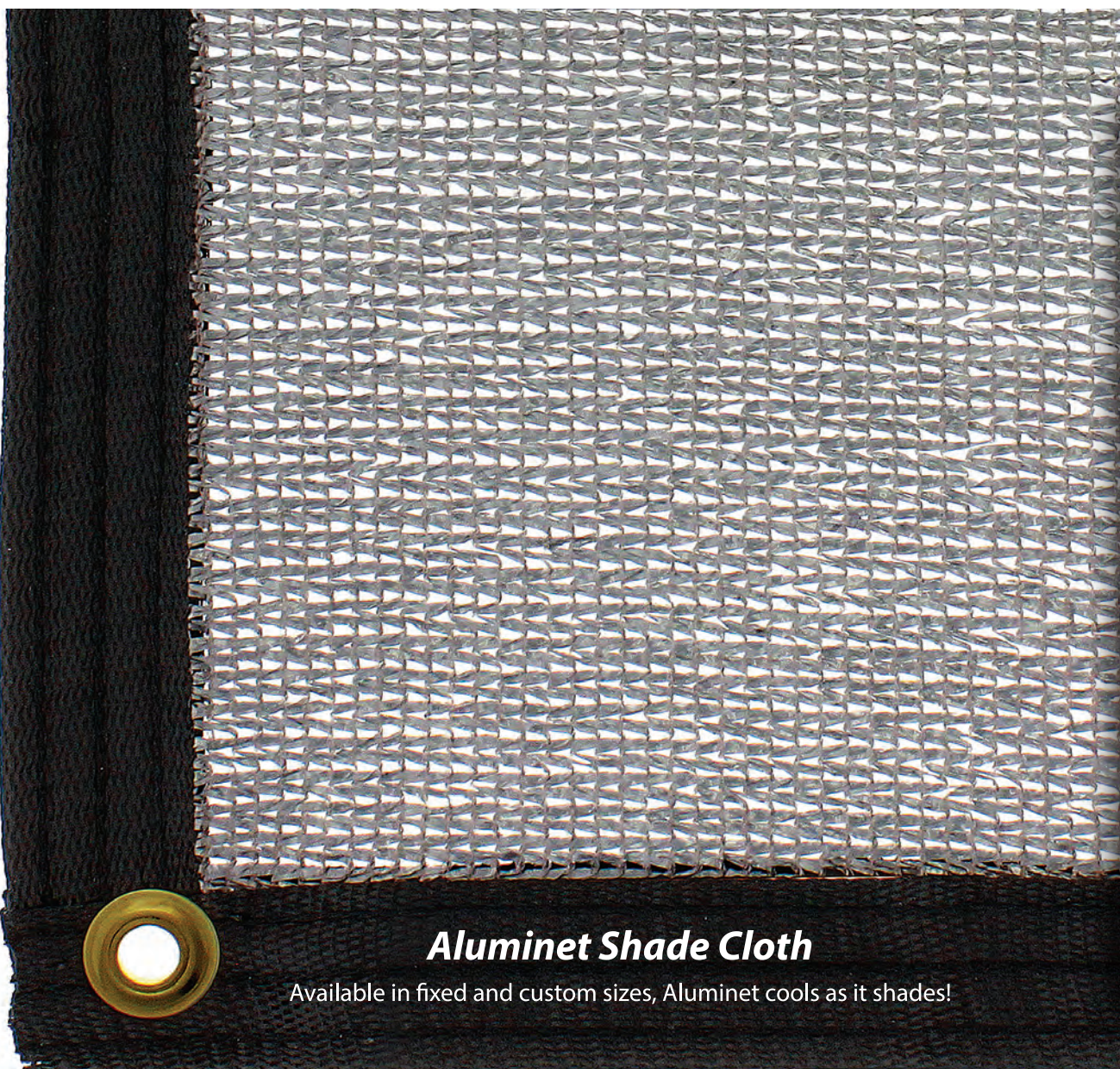
Dümmen Orange

This combination, comprised of calibrachoas Kona Mango, Cherry Red, and Royal White, manifested all the attributes we have come to expect from this top-selling series: medium growth habit, timing, earliness, exceptional uniformity, day length neutrality, large flowers and a wide range of colors. This series provides a balance between ease of production and retail performance. As I visited garden centers and box stores, and worked in a retail garden center for Mother's Day weekend, I found that the retail sales of the single color, monoculture calibrachoa baskets paled in comparison to the designer mixes and recipes. The importance of this segment cannot be overstated. It is significant and crucially important to wholesale and retail programs.

14. MIXER PLUM PERFECTION

Suntory

The petunia Surfinia series was introduced 30 years ago, and it continues to be one of the top-performing petunia series in the industry. The components in this mixer are Wild Plum, Blue Veined, and White Improved. There are six Surfinia Mixers in the program for 2020. As I travel the trial circuit during the summer and evaluate petunia performance, the Surfinias are incomparable for vigor, heat tolerance, grandiflora size flowers, color stability and floriferousness. The series continues to be utilized in metropolitan and retail areas in large basket programs. We have had an emphasis the past few years on earliness and compactness in breeding programs, and obviously that is important in production and at retail in specific programs, but the need for Surfinias and other vigorous and large flowering series will continue. Petunia 'Surfinia Purple Starshine', a bicolor novelty, has been added for 2020. *gpn*



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