

# 1 Exceptional 2021 ANNUAL INTRODUCTIONS

*The second installment of our Costa Farms trial evaluation will highlight strong, season-long performers.*



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Last month, I highlighted dynamic and early flowering annual introductions for 2021 from my late January visit to the Costa Farms spring trial. I returned in mid-March to evaluate additional new annual introductions following 14 weeks in ground beds. I have selected 15 new varieties, which exhibited attributes we will see in southern and northern trials in mid to late August, that include vigor, color retention, durability,

floriferousness and, most importantly, weather tolerance. These exceptional new varieties were introduced by nine international flower breeders.

## 1. GERBERA 'GARVINEA MAJESTIC BURGUNDY'

*HilverdaFlorist*

The interspecific gerbera Garvineas were introduced in 2009, and the breeding and introduction of new series and colors has been continuous with the addition of the Classic, Sweet and Cheeky series. The Majestic series is new for 2021 and is comprised of three brilliant colors, Yellow, Light Pink and Burgundy. HilverdaFlorist promotes the strong genetics of this new series, and my observations were definitely consistent with that statement based on the brightness, color saturation and vibrancy of the flowers. I was specifically impressed with the two-toned, double-

crested Burgundy. Garvineas have become a popular spring program throughout the country for good reason. Their multiple attributes include heat tolerance, extended flowering, a prodigious flower canopy, uniformity, multiple flower forms, upright habit, and garden performance from spring through autumn. They are considered annuals in the northern regions and a perennial in the southern regions. They have been top performers throughout the country since their introduction. Production application includes 5-, 6- and 7-inch containers and consumer application as thrillers in patio containers and landscape beds.

## 2. BEGONIA 'I'CONIA BACIO PEACH'

*Dümmen Orange*

Dümmen Orange offers one of the largest and most diverse begonia portfolios in the industry, including the I'Conia Miss types, I'Conia Portofinos and I'Conia Uprights.

The Bacios, comprised of four varieties, are new for 2021 and offer a more compact series for quarts and baskets. This is a compact version of the Portofinos with outstanding uniformity for bench-run production. The double flowers are smaller than the Portofinos, but the flower count is plentiful and the four colors — White, Orange, Coral and Peach — are bright and contrast strikingly with the dark foliage. This series is adaptable in shade to partial sun in the northern regions. All the varieties demonstrated a rounded,

compact habit. Peach was my favorite in this trial for its floriferousness, tight canopy and unique vibrant flower color.

## 3. DAHLIA 'MEGABOOM BERRY BLAST'

*Dümmen Orange*

'Megaboom Berry Blast' is a standalone introduction for 2021. Four additional colors will be introduced for 2022. This will be a more compact series than the popular XXLs, but with comparable flower size and timing. The semi-dinner plate flowers on the Berry Blast were positioned on shorter peduncles with a colorful presentation above the foliage canopy. The flowers were large, striking, dramatic and floriferous with yellow centers and bicolor white and rose flowers. This variety and the series will have production application in 6-inch, mixed containers and large patio container programs.

## 4. GERANIUM INTERSPECIFIC 'MOJO CRANBERRY SPLASH'

*Syngenta Flowers*

Syngenta Flowers has expanded its extensive geranium collection with the Mojo series for 2021. This series includes Orange, Salmon, White and Cranberry Splash. Mojo Dark Red was introduced last year and was outstanding in spring programs this season. The series is characterized by dark green foliage, uniformity, medium vigor, excellent weather tolerance and mounded tight





branching. The colors demonstrated these attributes in the field trial, and I was particularly impressed with the vibrant rose petals and dark centers of Cranberry Splash. The Mojoes are more vigorous than the Tango and Moxie series, and are comparable to the Calliope Mediums and Americanas. Production application includes 2.5 quarts and larger.

### 5. PETUNIA 'MAIN STAGE GLACIER SKY'

*Selecta One*

Glacier Sky is the first Sky type petunia variety to join the Main Stage series. This is the most vigorous, trailing petunia series from Selecta One. The grandiflora size blooms and the audacious flower pattern of deep purple petals with a white picotee edge speckled with white flecks were truly eye-catching. The flower size, plant vigor and durability were outstanding in the trial. Two new Sky types will be added to the Headliner series as well — Electric Purple Sky and Crystal Sky. We will continue to see the introduction of more novelty Sky type petunias from breeders in the years ahead.

### 6. PETCHOA 'SUPERCAL ROSE'

*Sakata*

Sakata has introduced SuperCal Rose to the series for 2021. This variety was extremely floriferous with saturated rose colored flowers and striking white centers. The flowers were stable, non fading, vivacious and minimal flecking. The SuperCals now comprise 15 varieties, five SuperCal premiums and three mixes for 2021. The SuperCals have exceptional weather tolerance and excellent disease resistance, are self cleaning, and are one of the only plant series that continues to perform until frost in all regions of the country. In addition, when I visit basket trials in late summer throughout the country, these top-performing SuperCal mixed combinations continue to provide resilience, color and durability.

### 7. VINCA 'QUASAR ORANGE TARGET'

*Green Fuse Botanicals*

We had the introduction of the unique novelty Tattoo vinca series from seed two years ago, and Green

Fuse has followed up in 2021 with the vegetative novelty Quasar series. This is composed of five multicolored varieties: Deep Space Blue, Plum Swirl, Red Target, Salmon Target and Orange Target. This is a vigorous, large flowering series for quarts and mixed containers. These are designer colors to mix and match with a wide color palette of plant varieties for full sun exposure. Orange Target was especially stunning with dark centers and orange petals.

### 8. PENTAS 'GLITTERATI RED STAR'

*PanAmerican Seed*

We have many outstanding pentas series in the marketplace today for multiple spring and summer applications. PanAmerican Seed introduced 'Glitterati Purple Star' in 2017 and has introduced 'Glitterati Red Star' for 2021. Each five-petaled flower offers a stunning star pattern on a large flower cluster positioned well above the foliage. The plant architecture is upright with excellent branching, providing a mass of color. The new Red Star will complement Purple Star and offer a striking upright component in monocultural and mixed containers. Production application includes quarts, six inch and gallons.

### 9. CALIBRACHOA 'BLOOMTASTIC CHILI PEPPER'

*Dümmen Orange*

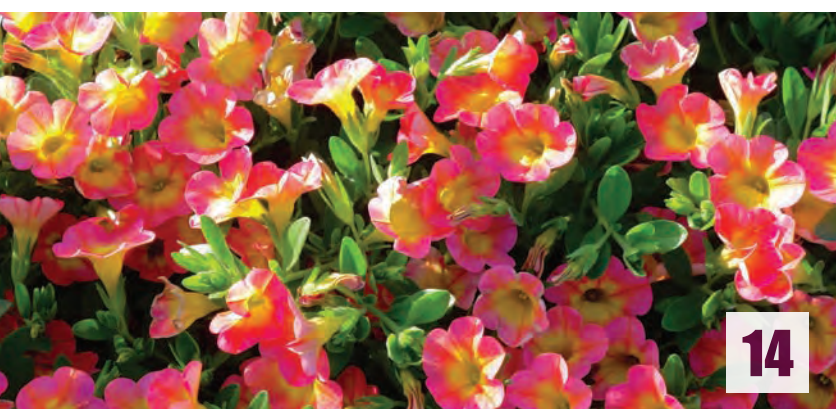
This series is the most vigorous and, I believe, the most heat tolerant in the Dümmen Orange calibrachoa collection. Rose Quartz may be the most ubiquitous calibrachoa in the industry for three reasons: bloom size, heat tolerance and stunning bicolor flowers. The additional colors have the same attributes, and there are now eight colors including Chili Pepper and Purple for 2021. The extra large flowers and vigor provide an outstanding series for combinations and baskets. Chili Pepper was exceptionally floriferous in the trial beds with tight internodes and flowers with dark centers and rose colored gradations.

### 10. PETUNIA FLASH FORWARD SERIES

*Syngenta Flowers*

Syngenta Flowers has introduced some significant vegetative and seed





petunia series the past few years, and the new Flash Forward milliflora seed series was impressive in the trial beds for its earliness, colorful flower canopy, uniformity and heat tolerance. This series improves upon and replaces the Picobella Cascade series. The flowers are mid-size, the habit was spreading but maintained short internodes and all the colors manifested durability and resilience in the beds following 10 to 12 weeks of heat, humidity and rain. The series is day length neutral, maturing at 18 inches. There are 11 varieties and three mixes for 2021.

### 11. OSTEOSPERMUM 'TRADEWINDS SUNSET'

*Syngenta Flowers*

I have followed the breeding and introduction of osteospermums for over 20 years, observing series and specific varieties that provide versatility with heat tolerance, controlled growth habit, bold and bright colors, and minimal vernalization. The garden performance is improving every year, and many series are moving from shoulder months to the prime selling season. I have been impressed with the Tradewinds the past few years, specifically Lemon Zest, which was my favorite last year for its heat tolerance and vibrant flower color late into the summer. Sunset is new for 2021, and it was outstanding in the trial with a prodigious flower canopy and distinctive flowers with a violet center and transitional ray petals of yellow and bronze.

### 12. VERBENA 'VANESSA BICOLOR INDIGO'

*Danziger*

Danziger introduced three new Vanessa colors for 2021: Dark Pink, Red and Bicolor Indigo. This is the most vigorous series in their verbena offering and is now composed of nine semi-trailing varieties with wide ranging solid and bicolor flowers. This series has been trialed extensively in regional and European trials since its introduction. I have evaluated the series in regional trials since its inception, and their multiple attributes have been consistent throughout the summer. Many of the colors have been top verbena performers in southern and northern trials. They have mildew tolerance, minimal flower cycling, early excellent color retention and impressive heat tolerance. There are three bicolors in the series, and they are characterized by sharp and defined color separation, which creates flowers that

pop. Bicolor Indigo maintained excellent vigor, floriferousness and flower stability. Production application includes gallons, combinations, baskets and landscape beds.

### 13. PETUNIA 'SPLASH DANCE PURPLE POLKA'

*Danziger*

Last month I highlighted 'Splash Dance Bolero Blue', one of three speckled flower introductions for 2021 from Danziger that manifested a colorful canopy with defined patterns. In my March evaluation, 'Splash Dance Purple Polka' demonstrated a mounded habit, outstanding speckle pattern retention, large flowers and excellent heat tolerance. Magenta Mambo is the third variety in this series, and they will be represented in regional trials this summer. Danziger trialed many speckled petunia experimentals throughout the United States and Europe last year, and these three met the criteria for introduction.

### 14. CALIBRACHOA 'SUPERBELLS CORAL SUN'

*Proven Winners*

Proven Winners offers multiple calibrachoa series including Superbells, Table Tops, Doubles, Punch types, Holy and Stars. Coral Sun is the new Superbells introduction for 2021, and it is remarkable with tight internodes and a multitude of flowers consisting of yellow centers and bright pink petals transitioning to light coral. In regard to flower timing, this variety falls into the early category.

### 15. PETUNIA 'DURABLOOM HOT PINK'

*Dümmen Orange*

Many international flower breeders have added a vigorous landscape series to their petunia collections in the last few years to expand the production application choices and provide another resilient petunia series for large baskets, patio containers, and landscape beds. Dümmen Orange introduced the interspecific 'DuraBloom Royal Pink' this spring and will add six additional varieties for 2021. The colors demonstrated excellent branching, day length neutrality, a vigorous mounded habit, large flowers and a prolific flower canopy in the trial. 'DuraBloom Hot Pink' was especially vibrant and eye catching. The entire series will be trialed throughout the country this summer to test its landscape and garden performance. [gpn](#)

### CORRECTION

In my May article, "Precocious Annuals," I mistakenly identified petunia 'Easy Wave Rose Fusion' as Pink Fusion. I apologize for any confusion.