



'Tis the Season

The 2021 poinsettia trial season produced some outstanding new varieties that you may want to consider adding to your benches for the 2022 holiday season.

BY TREVOR HILLBURN

As 2021 came to a close with another record-breaking year, it looks like some normalcy may be right around the corner for our industry. No matter how many times I hear "All I Want for Christmas Is ..." or how many of my neighbors put up Christmas lights early, nothing starts the holiday season for me like the N.G. Heimos trials in Millstadt, Illinois. Walking into those greenhouses and having a reunion of industry friends always sets the mood for a wonderful holiday season.

As always, Amy Morris and her team did a spectacular job showing each breeder's outstanding genetics. I want to thank the Heimos staff along with Beekenkamp, Dümme Orange, Lazzeri, Rinehart, Selecta One and Syngenta Flowers for their ever-impressive cutting-edge breeding. As always, I was very impressed with the new releases this season. There has been a dramatic shift in breeders not releasing new varieties that show signs of heat delay or types that have problems shipping. There also seems to be an incredible shift in the fresh whites to be brighter ivory tones and less cream colored.

PICKS FOR '22

After two days of careful row by row evaluations and speaking with each of the breeder representatives, below are my top picks that were true standouts for the coming 2022 season. While I never recommend a grower make a wide-sweeping change with new varieties to a functioning program, I would encourage you to do substantial trials of these selections, as they have significant promise and improvements to existing lines.

1. 'Norwin Orange' | Dümme Orange

This beautiful new orange release gets its name from Norwin Heimos himself, who passed away in 2021 at the age of 90. Norwin was the first grower to find a pink poinsettia sport in his greenhouse and send it back to Ecke Ranch for a shared patent; therefore, it was fitting to include him in yet another new color breakthrough to the class. This poinsettia is an 8-week response time with full medium vigor. Unlike previous orange varieties on the market, this has a true glowing vivid orange color and traditional premium-shaped bracts. To top that off, it has some of Dümme Orange's late developing cyathia, giving it an incredibly long shelf life and no heat delay.



2. 'Brilliant White' | Selecta One

This is some of the new Ivory breeding in whites, and it does not disappoint! This variety has an 8-week response time with compact to medium vigor. What is truly unique about it is the dark green foliage that these vivid bracts sit entirely on top of the plant, and the thickness of the bract gives a very durable feel. This thick bract will protect the finishing from rabbit footing or sunburns as they finish in higher light regions.

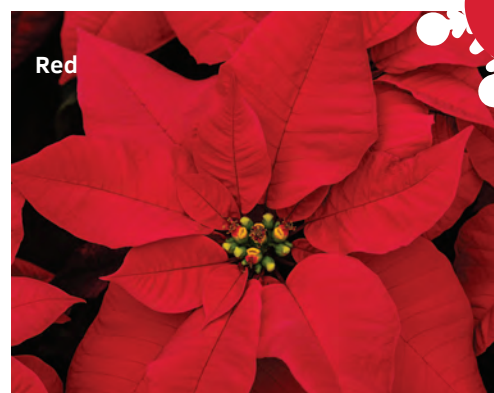
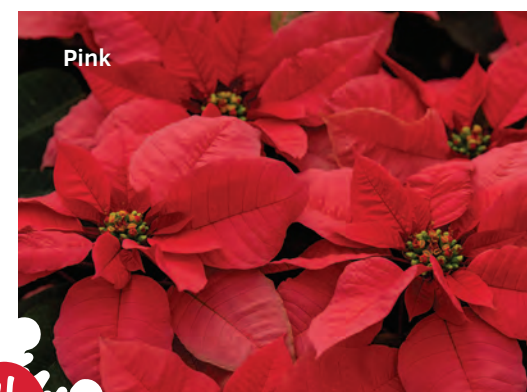


3. 'Desiderio Red' | Lazzeri

A great new addition from the Italian breeder with a 7-week response time and medium vigor. The bracts have a level and horizontal appearance, ideal for shipping. There is a mild heat delay in this series, from what I understand, but for a 7-week item, this could be a good selection for a Black Friday sell window. The transitional bracts are also very dark, giving this variety a remarkable depth for the consumer.

4. Early Elegance series | Selecta One

The breeders knocked it out of the park with this new series, which has a Red, White, Pink and Marble. This series is a 7-week response time with a robust medium vigor. This series is designed for a Week 46 retail delivery, with substantial vigor to fill the containers. If you struggle with some of these early finishers getting to size, this series may offer a robust solution with a full palette of colors.



5. 'Jack Frost' | Rinehart Poinsettias

A wonderful 8.5-week response time with strong enough vigor for a variety of container sizes. This variety thrives in higher light situations and has incredibly strong stem strength, trialed for its heat resistance and ability to keep its almost paper white coloring. This poinsettia not only has an awesome name but awesome florist-sized bracts to go with it.



6. 'FabYULEous' | *Dümmen Orange*

This release for high-density growing is truly fabYULEous! This poinsettia's flat bracts and v-shape structure make this a true row run variety while maintaining a florist quality presentation for high-value sales. This is a solid choice for those in the grocery-growing chain and box store spectrum. 'FabYULEous' is a very reliable 8-week poinsettia that can be grown almost pot tight with minimal stretch or loss of stem strength for a high profit and high-quality program.

7. 'Kayla' | *Beekenkamp*

This beautiful 7.5-week response oakleaf type variety provides a premium texture and high-value retail appeal. The foliage is a dark green, and the overall plant structure has a medium vigor. This would also be a classic addition to any straight-up/standard poinsettia grower. The stem strength on this and all the Beekenkamp releases is incredible! To add to all of that, it has late-developing cyathia to give it maximum shelf life and consumer satisfaction.

8. 'Mouse Pink' | *Selecta One*

This new pink makes a perfect pair along with the Selecta One signature variety 'Christmas Mouse Red'. 'Christmas Mouse Pink' has an 8.5-week response time with medium vigor and is ready only four days later than 'Christmas Mouse Red'. The bract has multiple shades as it stacks, giving it a remarkable depth in colors. These varieties have excellent POP materials such as tags, sleeves and branded containers. These varieties do not require a ring for 6-inch production.

9. 'Runway Red' | *Dümmen Orange*

This poinsettia is definitely ready for the runway! This poinsettia displays the most beautiful classic red bracts with an 8-week response time and a true medium vigor. The under bracts truly develop, making it a full canopy of color. 'Runway Red' is the perfect shipping season poinsettia for independent garden centers and florist quality demands.

10. 'Serena Red' | *Lazzeri*

This fantastic poinsettia sports an incredible number of bracts per pinch. I counted at least eight or nine per 6-inch container. Strong v-shape appearance on this 8-week response timed poinsettia with a solid medium vigor. This variety was heat trialed in Florida with no heat delay. This would be a perfect variety for florist 8-inch crops.



11. 'Ranch Red' | Rinehart Poinsettias

Ranch Red calls out to Ecke Ranch, where Steve Rinehart started with poinsettias and poinsettia breeding. The 'Ranch Red' is an 8-week response time with true medium vigor. What I found most appealing about this is the incredible cyathia in the plant. The cyathia were every bit as impressive as the red bracts themselves, providing a Christmas plant decked out in gold! Like all Rinehart breeding, this variety has been trialed to have zero heat delay along with the strongest stems they can breed.



12. 'Rojo Red' | Rinehart Poinsettias

If you are looking for a late-season finisher with a medium habit, look no further than 'Rojo Red'. This variety is a true 9-week variety with no late-season stretching. This breeding from Steve Rinehart supports an incredible number of smaller bracts perfect for shipping without damage. The stems were so strong, in my opinion, that they did not need a ring for the 6-inch containers they were grown in. This variety will shine for late-season premium Church sales.

13. 'Whitestar' and 'Fantasy Color' | Syngenta Flowers

Although this is not a new variety from Syngenta Flowers, this remains the most popular variety for the 'Fantasy Color' painting, now available through Ball Seed. According to the product champion, Andrew Lee, "With 17 years of continued growth in this product line, we now estimate that 10% of all poinsettias sold in the United States are painted or glittered." The Fantasy Colors brand was absorbed by Ball Seed in the Gloeckner purchase last year. Whitestar remains a truly reliable 8-week response time and an outstanding performer through the years.



14. Tidings series | Dümmer Orange

The Tidings series is a release of two genetically identical sports, but with a reversed bract pattern. Both are 8-week medium vigor varieties. Dark Pink has an incredible stable look to it that will give Ice Crystals a run for its money! This variety also has a bit more vigor for making large pots. Light Pink has that excellent marbling color with soft pinks surrounded by blush white. As both varieties are reverse sports of one another, they have the perfect genetic uniformity for consistency in mixes or just merchandised together at retail.

As always, I highly recommend you reach out to your local sales representative and see

if any of these new introductions are the right fit for you and your operations. I hope everyone has a beautiful spring, and you have found this helpful in planning for your next poinsettia season! [gpn](#)

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