

Hitting the BIG 9-0!

As All-America Selections celebrates its 90th anniversary this year, it continues to recognize the best of the best in breeding.



BY DIANE BLAZEK

In 2022, All-America Selections (AAS) will be celebrating its 90th anniversary.

That's right! Back in 1932, Ray Hastings founded All-America Selections as a neutral, non-profit organization that tested and trialed new seed varieties to prove (or disprove) the garden performance claims from the entering breeders.

The organization is still doing that today but in even broader and bigger terms. Instead of just seed trials, AAS has now “branched out” to include vegetative annuals, as well as vegetative, tissue culture, bareroot and woody perennials.

Ninety years ago, everything was trialed in-ground. Today, we trial both in-ground and in containers. Last month, we announced our first vegetable/edible winner from those container trials! (More on that later...)

AWARD WINNING SELECTIONS

In the early years of AAS, the number of Gold Medal Winners was high because of the many breeding advancements in the industry and plant hybridizing becoming more common. Gold Medal awards are reserved for those varieties exhibiting a breeding breakthrough and are therefore not as common as a standard AAS National or Regional award.

Recently, AAS has seen some amazing new entries come through our trials — and three of them have become Gold Medal Winners in the past 15 months.

The three varieties boasting the coveted AAS Gold Medal status are:

1. Zinnia ‘Profusion Red Yellow Bicolor F1’.
2. Petunia ‘Bee’s Knees’.
3. Begonia ‘Viking Explorer Rose on Green’ F1.



2021 AAS FLOWER WINNER

Zinnia 'Profusion Red Yellow Bicolor F1' (*Sakata Ornamentals*)

"JUST SO CUTE! WOW, WOW, WOW!" When multiple judges write comments like that, it's no surprise that it's a Gold Medal Winner! Introducing ... a beautiful new bicolor addition to the popular Profusion series of zinnias you

probably already grow. This gorgeous zinnia starts the season with a bold vibrant red center ring surrounded by golden-yellow outer petals. As the season progresses, the aging flowers morph into soft, beautiful shades of

apricot, salmon, and dusty rose to bring a plethora of color to the garden, all from one variety!

Trial garden visitors clamored over this floriferous and compact plant during the summer trials, noting how well the plant continued to bloom new flowers over old so there was never a decline in the beauty. This AAS Winner is an interspecific cross between two species: *Zinnia elegans* and *Zinnia angustifolia*, inheriting the large flowers from the *elegans* parent and the disease tolerance from the *angustifolia* parent. In the landscape, Zinnia Profusion grows well in both cool and warm climates. For growers, Profusion zinnias offer great germination meaning a higher number of usable and transplantable seedlings. Generally a fast-turn crop, Profusion will finish in as little as 9 to 10 weeks in large packs, and 11 to 12 weeks in larger-sized containers and hanging baskets.

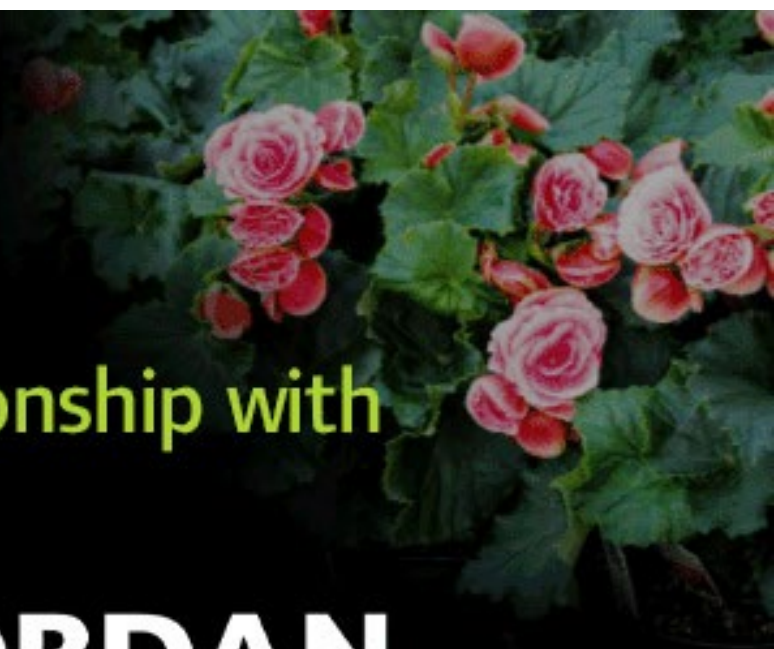
AAS Judge comments:

- "Started as an exceptional red and yellow bicolor, with very good garden performance and plant

Start a sustainable relationship with



**EAST JORDAN
PLASTICS, INC.**
The Sustainable Choice™



habit. It would have received my approval as a winner, but then the faded blooms turned rosy, and it knocked my socks off (well, sandals because it was too hot for socks)! Thank you for being a bright spot in 2020.”

- “The entry is one of the most interesting zinnia varieties I’ve come across. I really like the mixture of colors as the flowers age and fade.”
- “I dread pulling this one out of the garden because I loved it so! Three different effects based on flower age.”

2022 AAS ORNAMENTAL WINNER

Petunia ‘Bee’s Knees’ (Ball FloraPlant)

This yellow spreading petunia was so outstanding and eye-catching in the AAS Trials that the judges deemed it a Gold Medal Winner — the first petunia to win a gold medal distinction since 1950! Each ‘Bee’s Knees’ petunia is filled with lush blooms that put on a colorful show of deep yellow, non-fading flowers all season long. The intense yellow petunia color contrasts beautifully against the deep green leaves. ‘Bee’s Knees’ offers great garden performance in a variety of conditions and requires very little maintenance.

Gardeners will love its deep, rich yellow color and its versatile mounding habit. It works great as an element in mixed containers or as a hanging basket, but also thrives as a long-blooming groundcover. For growers, cuttings are available and average propagation time is just 3 to 4 weeks with no rooting hormone nor pinch required. Total crop time for 4- to 5-inch containers is 5 to 7 weeks, for a 6-inch it’s 6 to 8 weeks and for a 10- to 12-inch basket, it’s 8 to 11 weeks. Tags, bench cards and cart banners are available from the breeder’s website.

AAS Judge comments:

- “The plant had a vigorous habit that filled in the containers. It was also noticed that the plant was the best at self-cleaning and had the longest-lasting bloom.”
- “Amazing eye-catching color, full

AASWINNERS.COM — YOUR RESOURCES AWAIT!

All America Selections also has many different tools to help growers promote their AAS Winners! Not only do the breeders and tag companies have materials, but AAS does as well.

First, we have a wholesale Sources list on our website at <https://all-americaelections.org/wholesale-sources/>.

Second, downloadable explanation signage, PowerPoint presentations,

bench cards and logos are at <https://all-americaelections.org/aas-ambassador-tools/>.

Lastly, printable Winner brochures, signs and variety markers are at <https://all-americaelections.org/signs-and-brochures/>.

Don’t wait! Now’s the time to grow these Gold Medal Winners and Winners from our new trials!



cover with color. Bloom color does pop due to darker yellow veining and throat.”

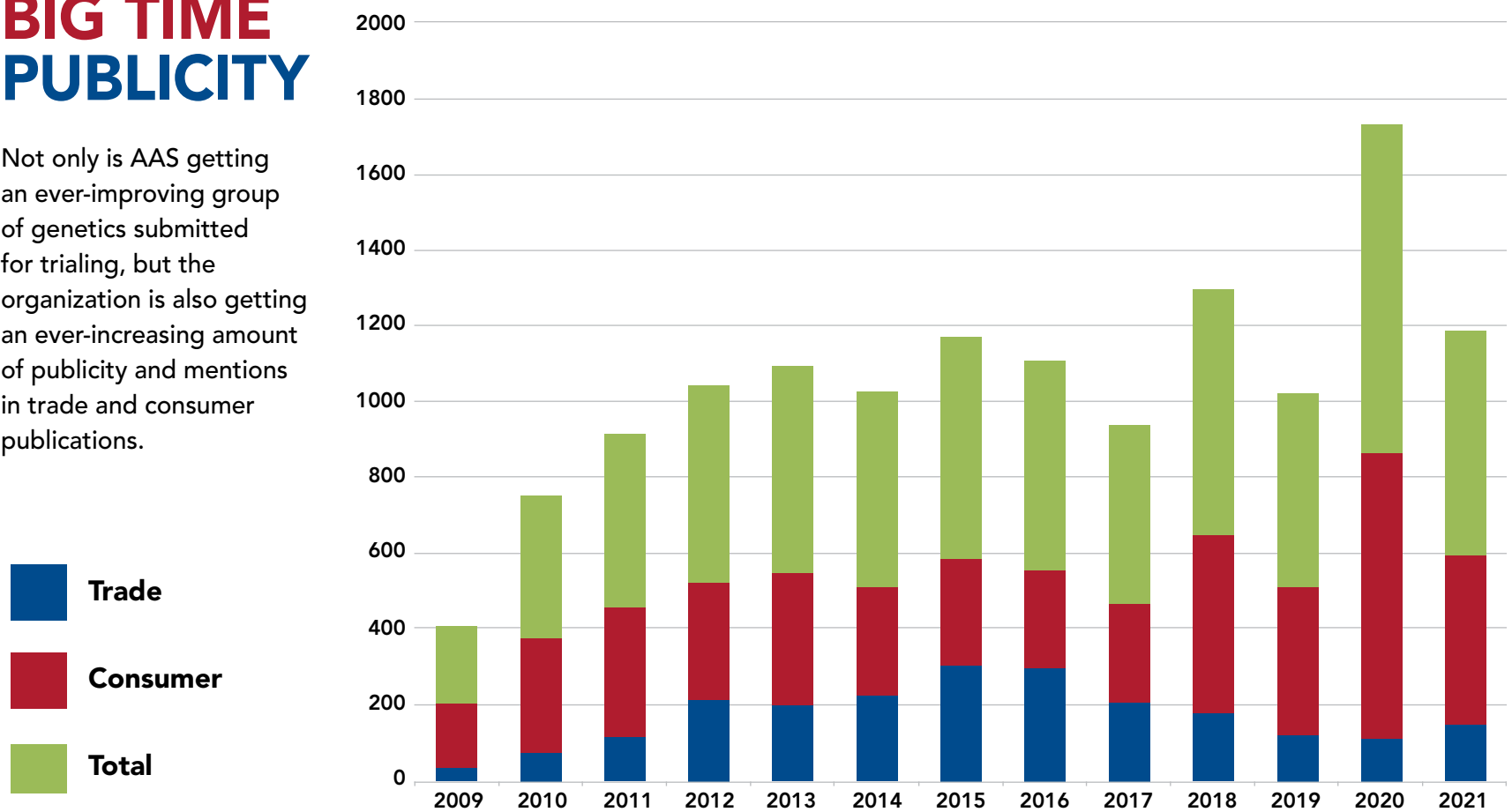
- “This petunia, compared to its comparisons, performed very

well in the garden this year. It withstood the summer heat and tolerated the colder and wetter conditions of the end of the season very well.”

BIG TIME PUBLICITY

Not only is AAS getting an ever-improving group of genetics submitted for trialing, but the organization is also getting an ever-increasing amount of publicity and mentions in trade and consumer publications.

PUBLICITY 2009-2021



HEMP
PRODUCTION
NEWS

&

CANNABIS
PRODUCT NEWS

ARE NOW POWERED BY

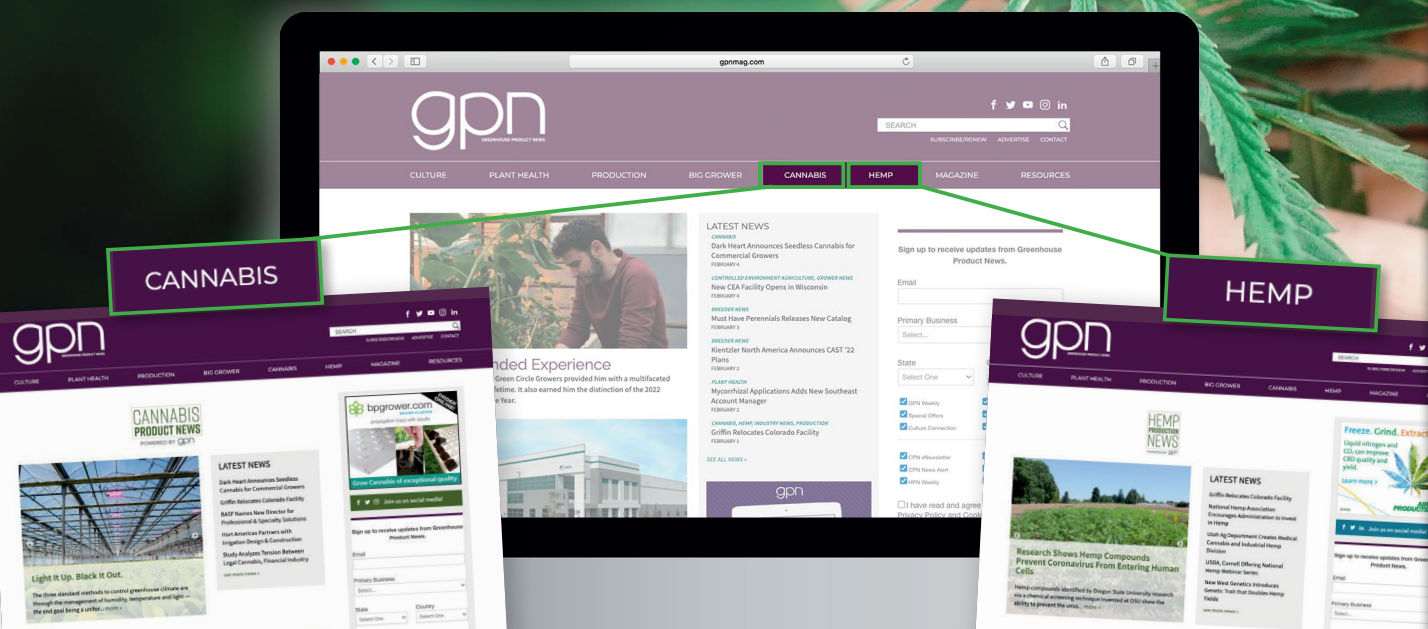
gpn
GREENHOUSE
PRODUCT NEWS

Growing Cannabis or Hemp?

GPN is proud to be your one-stop resource for everything you need to succeed.



Be sure to visit **GPNMag.com** daily for the latest information.



2022 AAS ORNAMENTAL WINNER

Begonia 'Viking Explorer Rose on Green' (*Sakata Ornamentals*)

Erase that sea-faring conqueror image and replace it with this garden-faring beauty that performs exceptionally well and has high impact color. This trailing begonia “explores” the garden by spreading and spilling its branches over the edges of hanging baskets and containers. Prolific rose-colored flowers stand out against the glossy green foliage and do so all season long. It has a strong tolerance to heat and many diseases, as well as both wet and dry conditions. These new Vikings are sure to be a garden favorite. The early flowers match the rest of the Viking series of begonias. Total crop time is 16 to 21 weeks.

AAS Judge comments:

- “The compact plants are covered in large flowers. The flowers are nicely held above the foliage.”
- “Lovely color with a great trailing habit. Stellar performance in the container.”
- “This begonia was awesome this year! Compared to the comparisons, it was more floriferous and had a nice, basket-like habit. Excellent variety!”

2022 AAS EDIBLE – VEGETABLE WINNER

Pepper 'Quickfire' (*Tozer Seeds*)

*The First AAS Award Winner from the
Container Edible Trial*

I mentioned earlier about the first edible container trials, and this is the winner from that new trial! Mighty, strong, hot and quick — what more might one want in a hot Thai-type pepper? Quickfire peppers produce plenty of hot, delicious fruits on a compact, sturdy plant that is perfect for container gardening; no staking is required. This pepper has tremendous ornamental value but was bred for its taste and yield. Culinary gardeners will definitely want to give this gem a try in their Thai and other Southeast Asian dishes where a little heat and kick give the meal some quickfire! This pepper will make a great addition to container/patio vegetable programs.



AAS Judge comments:

- “Tremendous yield. Sturdy little plant with good habit which is also quite attractive from an ornamental standpoint.”
- “The entry has the heat and flavor I would expect from a Thai dish.”
- “Hot little buggers. From a home garden perspective, these little plants are right on the money. They almost look like a large ornamental pepper and could probably be used as such in a mixed patio container.” ■