

2022 All American Selections

By Ray Novitske, Fairfax Master Gardener

Since 2017, we have been presenting the annual All-American Selections in January, and are once again presenting the latest selections for this year. They consist of ornamentals and edibles that are chosen based on their taste, appearance and performance.

All-American Selections Inc. is a non-profit organization that makes annual selections of the best plants based on trial garden performance over the past few years. The organization tests the latest plant breeders' submissions in trial gardens and compiles the evaluations from plant nurseries, public gardens, retailers and universities.



Viking Explorer Rose on Green Begonia

This trailing begonia spreads and spills its branches over the edges of hanging baskets and containers. Prolific blooms and glossy green foliage tolerates heat and many diseases as well as both wet and dry conditions.



Icicle Eggplant

This cylindrical white eggplant has fewer spines than most eggplants and an improved taste and texture. Large fruits produce an abundant yield with fewer seeds on vigorous plants holding up to insect damage. Its pure white skin does not tend to yellow as other white varieties do.



Bauer Lettuce

An oakleaf lettuce that is easy and fast to grow can be harvested at baby leaf stage or left to mature into rosette shaped full-sized heads. It has a dark green color in a uniform compact habit, good for ground or container growing.



Buffy Pepper

This hot pepper produces a good yield of juicy thick-walled green to red fruits on strong upright plants. The fruits are attractive enough to be used as an ornamental, with slightly larger fruits and are faster to mature than others, with slightly less heat.



Dragonfly Pepper

Beautiful purple bell peppers from this cultivar have thick walls and a sweet taste, unlike other purple peppers. The green stage before turning purple is also just as delicious. Fruits are high on the plant keeping them above the soil. Four-lobed fruits will turn a bright red if left on the vine.



Bee's Knees Petunia

This yellow petunia is filled with lush blooms of non-fading flowers and deep green leaves all season long. Requiring little maintenance, the color and the mounding habit distinguishes it from other petunias. It is equally great for hanging baskets and containers or in the ground.



Concert Bell Sunflower

Multiple clusters of 10 to 12 flowers on each stem puts on a unique presentation. The yellow blooms appear earlier than most sunflowers after excellent seed germination and grow to 5 to 6 feet in height. Judges noted its durability and sturdiness in strong storms and winds.



Vertigo Deep Blue Torenia

This hybrid performed well in containers and landscapes. The number of flowers was impressive with non-fading petals contrasting with sky blue and yellow centers. The compact habit plants produced well in warmer climates and in strong sunlight for a long time period.



Purple Zebra Tomato

This fun striped tomato produces fruits with rich, complex flavors and a moderately firm texture. Dark red and green stripes with mahogany red interiors do not produce the muddy colorations common on other types. This sweet tasting fruit with thinner skins has some of the best disease resistance to wilts and blights.



Sunset Torch Tomato

This hybrid performed well in containers and landscapes. The number of flowers was impressive with non-fading petals contrasting with sky blue and yellow centers. The compact habit plants produced well in warmer climates and in strong sunlight for a long time period.



Pink Delicious Tomato

This early maturing tomato comes with an heirloom look and good flavor and texture mixed with hybrid disease resistance. The uniform fruit size also resists cracking. A pink tomato shines for its flavor and its disease resistance, especially in the southeast regions.



Century Star Watermelon

This seedless melon gives good yields of 10 lb fruits on long vines. Spotted fruits and great tasting flesh are crisp and sweet.

An important part of publicizing the results is to give the public an opportunity to see the winners growing. There are many AAS-designated display gardens throughout the country, and several are found in our region:

- Norfolk Botanical Garden, Norfolk, VA
- Virginia Tech Hampton Roads, Virginia Beach, VA
- Rapidan River Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden, Rapidan, VA
- Knitting Mill Creek Community Garden, Norfolk, VA
- Reynolds Community College, Goochland, VA
- Community Arboretum at Virginia Western, Roanoke, VA
- Willow Oaks, Richmond, VA
- Parkside High A+ Garden, Salisbury, MD
- Brookside Gardens, Wheaton, MD[†] flower winners only are displayed
- Clyburn Arboretum, Baltimore, MD[†] flower winners only are displayed