

## All American Selections, 2022-2023

*By Ray Novitske, Fairfax Master Gardener*

All-American Selections Inc. is a non-profit organization that since 1932 has been making annual selections of the best plants based on trial garden performance over the past few years. Each year, breeding companies submit new seed or plants to be grown in over 40 trial gardens located across North America. The plants are evaluated with current varieties on the market that have similar traits and that are considered market standards. Judging is performed by selected industry experts, past judges, universities, public gardens, growers, brokers, extension agents and retailers.

The selected winners represent the plants that demonstrate the best garden performance across North America as a result of growing in these trial and test gardens. Since the selections are made several times a year, the plants listed below represent the current winners as well as past selections that we have not yet featured.



**Echinacea 'Artisan Yellow Ombre'**

This is noted as a great plant for anyone wanting vibrant color all season. Intense golden yellow prolific blooms with graduated colors of yellow are impressed with a uniform growth habit and multi-branched plants. Pollinators will flock to this echinacea.



**Leucanthemum 'Carpet Angel'**

This is a first-ever groundcover Shasta Daisy. This perennial is daylength neutral meaning early blooms will continue all season long. Large 3-inch (8 cm) flowers with an inner frilly bloom grow only to a height of 6 inches (15 cm).

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**Cayenne Pepper 'Wildcat'**

This cayenne pepper has extra-large, 2 to 3 ounce fruits. A high-yielding plant with a very even growth habit, it produced nice thick, fleshy walls in the fruit. The 8-inch peppers (20 cm) are straighter than traditional cayenne fruits with a great smoky flavor, peppery sweetness and a mild pungency.



**Jalapeno Pepper 'San Joaquin'**

This is a determinate jalapeno that sets most of its fruit in a short window so there is a generous (about 50 fruits per plant) number of fruits ready all at the same time. But they hold their firmness and taste until you are ready to harvest. Judges loved the flavor that have just a hint of heat.



**Salvia 'Blue by You'**

This perennial features rich blue flowers that bloom up to two weeks earlier than the comparisons. With excellent winter hardiness and heat tolerance, blossoms show from late spring into fall with repeat blooms when spent blooms are removed. Adored by hummingbirds and butterflies but not by deer or rabbits.



**Coleus Premium 'Sun Coral Candy'**

This coleus features unique, multicolored foliage on a uniformly compact plant perfect for containers and small space gardens. Narrow serrated leaves gracefully drape down the mounded plants and hold colors well, even in full sun.



#### **Pepper 'Quickfire'**

Quickfire peppers produce plenty of hot delicious fruits on a compact, sturdy plant that are perfect for container gardening. This pepper has tremendous ornamental value but was bred for its taste and yield. Thai and other Southeast Asian dishes benefit where a little heat and kick are needed.



#### **Watermelon 'Rubyfirm'**

This new little cutie watermelon is a small, personal-sized melon that is about the size of a cantaloupe. Boasting very sweet and crisp flesh with minimal seed pips means a tasty summer delight can be yours. Each Rubyfirm plant will yield 2 to 3 fruits on its long vines.



#### **Snapdragon 'DoubleShot Orange' Bicolor**

DoubleShot Snapdragon Orange Bicolor is part of a new series of intermediate-height snaps for the garden or as cut flowers. The open-faced double flowers emerge and transition to a dusty shade as they age. Strong stems produced more branches and a higher flower count that didn't break off in strong winds.



#### **Tomato 'Zenzei'**

This regional winner produces a great early yield of fleshy plum tomatoes perfect for canning and freezing. Neat and tidy plants produce fruits that are uniformly shaped on indeterminate plants. The disease-resistance package on this new variety will help gardeners be even more successful.



**Verbena 'Beats Purple+White'**

Verbena Beats is a new series of verbena that is an incredible plant that flowers early, making it a pollinator magnet. The unique purple and white bicolor blooms maintain an attention-getting pattern and thrives during severe heat stress. A bonus is how it is resistant to powdery mildew.



**Colocasia 'Royal Hawaiian Waikiki'**

This is the first colocasia winner! Sturdy, large glossy leaves unfurled with a bold leaf coloration feature pink veins and creamy white centers. The deep burgundy stems produce a lush, compact plant that holds up well, even in wind and rain.



**Torenia Summery 'Love Pure White'**

This new torenia variety wowed the judges for its pure white coloration that sported larger blooms than the comparisons. It bloomed consistently over a long, wet, hot and humid summer. "This should be used in mass plantings for a great showing!" stated one judge. At 8 inches tall, it grows as a compact plant over the full season.



**Kabocha Squash 'Sweet Jade'**

This cute, single-serving-sized squash had high yields and good holding capability. Each fruit is between 1 and 2 pounds (1/2\_ 1 kg) and can be used for single servings of squash, as an edible soup bowl or in any number of Asian-style dishes. The deep orange flesh is dry yet sweet, and very



**Celosia 'Flamma Orange'**

This compact fiery orange variety produces numerous branches, each with a strong flower plume, as well as secondary blooms. It stands up to hot, humid and rainy conditions and also with its early flowers, that won't fade.



**Verbena bonariensis 'Vanity'**

A classic cottage garden plant creates a pollinator paradise in your garden and is also compact and easier to maintain. Deep blue/purple flowers are 1 to 1.5 inches (2-4 cm) across and continue to attract butterflies day in and day out. It performs well in hot dry conditions while remaining a showy garden plant.

If you are interested in viewing the trial plants on display during the growing season, visit these nearby gardens:

- Rapidan River Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden, Rapidan, VA
- Knitting Mill Creek Community Garden, Norfolk, VA
- Norfolk Botanical Garden, Norfolk, VA
- Reynolds Community College, Goochland, VA
- Community Arboretum at Virginia Western, Roanoke, VA
- Brookside Gardens, Wheaton, MD\* flower winners only are displayed
- Clyburn Arboretum, Baltimore, MD
- Frederick County Career and Technology Center
- Historic London Town and Gardens, Edgewater, MD
- Parkside High A+ Garden, Salisbury, MD
- University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, Princess Anna, MD