

All-America Selections Winners for 2017

All-America Selections has announced the winners for 2017. Look for the red, white and blue logo of **All-America Selections** on seed packets in retail stores, plant tags in bedding plants in garden centers or nurseries, or in mail-order catalogs this spring. Success is almost guaranteed with these varieties of reliable new flower and vegetable varieties. Some cultivars are designated as AAS Regional Winners, but most are National Winners.



The non-profit All-America Selections (AAS) organization was founded in 1932 to foster the development, production and distribution of new and better horticultural and agricultural varieties, species, strains and kinds in and for North America. AAS winners are superior new annual flower and vegetable plants recognized for significant achievements – a promise of gardening success. Only the very best varieties receive this prestigious award. All AAS winners have been tested for home garden performance in more than 65 independent test sites, each under the responsibility of an AAS judge, all over the United States and Canada. Gardeners can rely on AAS Winners to perform in their garden because of these unbiased, independent tests. Most of the time only one to three flower varieties and the same number of vegetables get this award each year, and sometimes none qualifies. This year there are sixteen winners, with twelve National Winners (7 flowers and 5 vegetables) and four Regional Winners (only the one flower and one vegetable that are appropriate for the Great Lakes Region are included here).



The **National AAS winners** for 2017 are:

AAS Flower Award Winner: Celosia 'Asian Garden'

This spiked beauty claimed victory in North America's trial sites to become the first ever AAS Winner from Japanese breeding company Murakami Seed. The judges gave this entry high marks in the greenhouse for the good branching, almost bushy growth habit and early to bloom flower spikes.

In the garden, 'Asian Garden' celosia continued to bloom on sturdy stems, keeping the bright pink color all summer long, holding up even through some of the first frosts of the season.



The AAS Judges commented on the fact that this celosia was a pollinator-magnet, making this AAS Winner a sure bet for pollinator-friendly gardens.

<i>Celosia argentea</i>
Common name: Celosia
Light needs: Full sun
Water needs: Dry to normal
Deadheading: No
Staking: No
Foliage color: Dark green
Plant habit: Upright
Plant height: 31-40"
Garden spacing: 12-15 inches
Bloom time: Late spring to frost
Bloom color: Rose
Bloom size: 0.6" dia., 1.5" long
Weather Tolerance: Drought, heat
Container: Yes
Pollinator Friendly: Yes
Closest comparisons on market: Flamingo

AAS Flower Award Winner: Dianthus 'Supra Pink'

Supra Pink joins its sister, 2006 AAS Winner Supra Purple, to give us two fantastic colors in an easy-to-grow interspecific dianthus for three-season (spring, summer, fall) garden color. This compact, bushy plant blooms prolifically with novel mottled pink



flowers sporting frilly petal edges that hold up even in summer heat and drought. No deadheading needed on this winner. One judge attempted to deadhead this entry but it re-bloomed too fast to do so! Supra Pink grows to just under a foot in height but is a vigorous grower and will deliver fancy, clear pink flowers for a long time as observed

over and over by the AAS Judges. Supra Pink was tested as an annual and won the award based on first-year performance, but similar to other dianthus, it may overwinter in some regions. Dianthus Supra will do best in a porous, well-draining soil that is high in organic matter, like compost or peat. Garden location should be in full sun to partial shade – they will survive and flower in shade, but not as well as when in more sun. As they flower, it is a good idea to dead-head, or remove spent flowers to prevent seed formation and encourage more flowers faster. In very cold winter areas, it may be helpful to provide a layer of mulch around the plant to help it survive the cold.

Dianthus hybrid

Common name: Dianthus

Light needs: Full to partial sun

Water needs: Normal

Deadheading: Yes

Staking: No

Foliage color: Light green

Plant habit: Compact, bushy

Plant height: 10-12"

Garden spacing: 10-12"

Bloom time: Spring to frost

Bloom color: Mottled pink

Bloom size: 1.5 inches

Fragrance: Slight

Weather Tolerance: Drought, cold, frost, rain, wind

Container: Yes

Pollinator Friendly: Yes, bees and butterflies

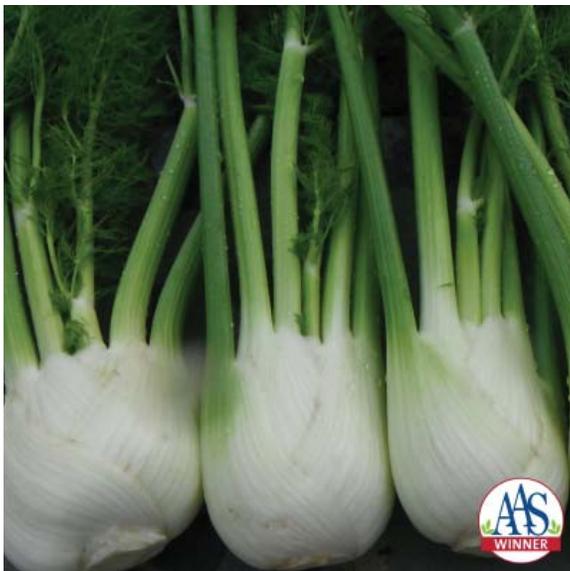
Low Edging: Yes

Closest comparisons on market: Supra Purple, Elegance Pink

AAS Vegetable Award Winner: Fennel 'Antares'

This winner is a "First in Class," as AAS has never before trialed and declared a fennel an AAS Winner.

What is extremely fun about this winning plant is its many uses: as an edible bulb; for its ornamental fronds; as a seed producer; and as a favorite food of pollinators, namely swallowtail caterpillars. The AAS Judges described Antares as a very uniform,



pure white, beautiful plant with a much improved, almost sweet, licorice/anise flavor as compared to other market varieties. It was also 7-10 days slower to bolt than comparison varieties. Many AAS Judges said they plan to plant this easy-to-grow fennel in their own gardens next year!

Foeniculum vulgare

Common name: bulb fennel

Light needs: Full sun

Water needs: Normal

Season Type: Warm season

Staking: No

Foliage color: Green

Plant habit: Bushy

Plant height: 24 inches

Garden spacing: 6 inches apart

Days to harvest: 68 (seed)

Fruit Color (Harvest): White bulb

Fruit Size: 4-5 inches

Fruit Flavor Description: Sweet, licorice/anise flavor

Number Of Fruits Per Plant: 1

Container: Yes

Closest comparisons on market: Orion, Preludio

AAS Ornamental Vegetative Award Winner: Geranium Calliope® Medium Dark Red

With an outstanding deep red velvety flower color and great branching habit, Calliope® was unmatched in the AAS Trials when compared to other market varieties. Calliope® Medium



Dark Red geranium is an interspecific hybrid with zonal-type flowers and leaves. This AAS Winner has a mounded, semi-spreading growth habit with strong stems supporting the flower heads that are loaded with deep red blossoms. These plants work great in containers, combination plantings, hanging baskets as well as in an in-ground landscape.

Gardeners will enjoy exceptional landscape performance in normal conditions as well as in more challenging high heat and drought conditions.

Pelargonium hybrid

Light needs: Full sun

Water needs: Drought tolerant

Deadheading: Yes

Staking: No

Foliage color: Dark green

Plant habit: Mounded

Plant height: 12-14"

Garden spacing: 14-16"

Bloom time: Spring to frost

Bloom color: Red

Bloom size: 3.25 inches

Weather Tolerance: Drought, heat

Container: Yes

Pollinator Friendly: Yes

Closest comparisons on market: 'Big Easy Dark Red', Calliope® Dark Red

AAS Vegetable Award Winner: Okra 'Candle Fire'

A unique red okra with pods that are round, not ribbed, and a brighter red color than the reddish burgundy okras currently available. This high-performing AAS Winner received high marks for productivity, taste, texture and tenderness as well as the ornamental value of red pods on red stems. One judge noted that Candle Fire okra was quite maintenance free to grow, except for the frequent harvesting, which is a great thing! Candle Fire thrives in the heat and is disease resistant even in hot humid climates like the south where it's perfect for traditional fried okra. Suitable for both fruit producing and ornamental use. Aged fruit can be used in flower arrangements. Dry seed can be used as coffee (without caffeine.) Plant requires soil with high organic matter content. Sandy and clay soil should be avoided. The cultivation environment should be about 68-95F degrees, sunny and with good ventilation. Direct seed sowing or seed-



ling transplanting are both recommended. The seeds should be soaked with water for 12 hours before being sown, which is the necessary process to enhance germination.

For home gardener, pruning is not necessary. With proper irrigation, this variety is easy to be managed because it is not susceptible to any special disease. Flower formation starts 50 days after sowing. The fruit can be harvested in 5-7 days after flowering. After the plant starts to bloom, every 10 days it should be supplied with water and fertilizer so as to ensure long-term harvest.

Abelmoschus esculentus

Common name: okra

Light Needs: Full sun

Water Needs: Normal

Season Type: Warm season

Staking Required: No

Plant Habit: Upright

Plant Height: 4 feet

Bloom Time: Summer to frost

Bloom Color: Rose

Bloom Size: Diameter 0.6 inches, length 1.5 inches

Pollinator Friendly: Yes

Weather Tolerance: Drought, heat

Garden Spacing: 18 inches

Days To Harvest (Sowing Seed): 60

Days To Harvest (Transplant): 30

Plant Spread: 24-28 inches

Closest comparisons on market: Carmine Splendor, Red Burgundy

AAS Vegetable Award Winner: Pepper 'Mad Hatter'

This exotic pepper wins on uniqueness alone! However, the plant's vigor, earliness, high yields, large size and awesome taste all contribute to its high score among AAS judges. Mad



Hatter is a member of the *Capsicum baccatum* pepper species from South America commonly used in Bolivian and Peruvian cuisine. You can impress your friends by growing this pepper and showing off the novel three-sided shape and deliciously sweet taste. The taste has a refreshing, citrusy floral flavor that

remains sweet, only occasionally expressing mild heat near the seeds. Be prepared for vigorous and robust plants that are easy to grow because they were bred for North America's many growing conditions. Use your abundant harvest raw in salads, pickled or stuffed with cheese...a new favorite!

Capsicum baccatum

Common name: Bishops crown pepper

Season Type: Warm season

Light Needs: Full sun

Water Needs: Normal

Plant habit: Bushy

Garden spacing: 2-3 feet

Days to harvest (transpl): 65 to 70 mature green; 85 to 90 ripe red

Fruit color (harvest): Red

Fruit Shape: Flattened-disc shaped fruit has lobes or wings

Fruit Size: 2-3.5" by 2-2.5"

Fruit Weight: 1.4-1.7 ounces

Fruit Flavor Description: Fruit has a delicate floral scent and rich flavor that intensifies and sweetens as it matures.

Fruits/Plant: 40-50

Closest comparisons on market: 'Balloon', 'Bishops Crown'

AAS Vegetable Award Winner: Tomato 'Patio Choice Yellow'

Patio Choice Yellow is a new compact, determinate tomato developed specifically for small spaces and container gardens. This AAS Winner produces very large yields of 1/2 ounce bright yellow cherry tomatoes on short vines that grow only 18 inches



tall. This mild flavored cherry tomato sets over 100 fruit on compact plants which are perfect for urban or small space food gardeners. Consider using these beautiful tomatoes either fresh or in the oven

or sun dried for a deliciously sweet treat. For even easier picking, plant in a hanging basket.

Solanum lycopersicum

Common name: Tomato

Season Type: Warm season

Plant habit: Compact determinate

Plant Spread: 18-20 inches

Garden spacing: 12-15"

Days to harvest (transpl): 45

Fruit color (harvest): Gold yellow

Fruit Shape: Round cherry

Fruit Size: 1 inches

Fruit Weight: 0.5 ounces

Fruit Flavor Description: Mild sweet with a touch of acid

Fruits/Plant: 100+

Disease Resistance or Tolerance: TMV, Fusarium wilt, Verticillium wilt

Closest comparisons on market: 'Little Sun Yellow', 'Honeybee'

AAS Flower Award Winner: *Verbena EnduraScape™ Pink Bicolor*



EnduraScape™ is described as “tough as nails” because it is the first verbena that can tolerate drought and heat plus survive cooler temperatures down to the low teens. This long-blooming pink bicolor verbena is spectacular in the landscape, edging a walkway or border as well as in large containers and baskets. Vigorous plants are sturdy spreaders that

pop with abundant soft pink blossoms that darken in intensity toward the center of the bloom. Pink Bicolor is the newest color in the series and the AAS Judges deemed it truly spectacular! Plant in full sun in large containers or in the ground about 18” apart. Avoid watering late in the day or evening, and fertilize regularly for biggest flower power!



Verbena peruviana
Common name: Verbena
Type: Flower from cutting
Plant habit: Compact determinate
Light Needs: Full sun
Water Needs: Dry to normal
Deadheading Recommended: No
Staking Required: No
Plant Habit: Spreading
Plant Height: 8-12 inches
Bloom Time: Spring to frost
Bloom Color: Pink
Bloom Size: 2 inches
Fragrance: Slight
Container: Yes
Pollinator Friendly: Yes
Weather Tolerance: Heat, cold, rain, frost, wind
Garden Spacing: 20 inches
Hanging Basket: Yes
Closest comparisons on market: *EnduraScape™* Lavender, Lanai Bright Eye

AAS Flower Award Winner: *Vinca ‘Mega Bloom Orchid Halo’* and *Vinca ‘Mega Bloom Pink Halo’*

Mega Bloom is an exciting new series of vinca bred to withstand heat and humidity without succumbing to disease. Orchid Halo produces huge bright rich purple blossoms with a wide white eye while Pink Halo produces huge soft pink blossoms with a wide white eye. These flowers present a striking look in the garden, even from a distance. Plants maintain a nice, dense habit with flowers staying on top of the foliage for full flower power color. Can grow in pots and bedding plant, and should be pinched when it has 4 to 6 true leaves. Grow in full sun for best growth.



Catharanthus roseus
Common name: Vinca
Type: Flower from seed
Light Needs: Full sun
Water Needs: Dry to normal
Deadheading Recommended: No
Staking Required: No
Plant Habit: Upright
Plant Height: 13-15 inches
Bloom Time: Summer
Bloom Color: Purple with white eye / Pink with white eye
Bloom Size: 3 inches
Container: Yes
Pollinator Friendly: Yes
Weather Tolerance: Heat
Garden Spacing: 10-20 inches
Closest comparisons on market: Titan® Lavender Blue Halo, Cora® Lavender, Vitesse Lavender Morn / Titan Rose Halo, Cora Lavender, Vitesse Rose Morn

AAS Flower Award Winner: Zinnia Profusion Red

This newest Profusion Zinnia winner is the fourth color in the single flower series to win the coveted AAS Winner award. The original Profusions were ground-breaking plants because of their compact form, disease resistance, early and continuous blooms all season long and ease in growing. Judges raved about the vibrant, perfectly true red color of this zinnia which doesn't fade in summer's intense rays. As one judge stated, "We have waited



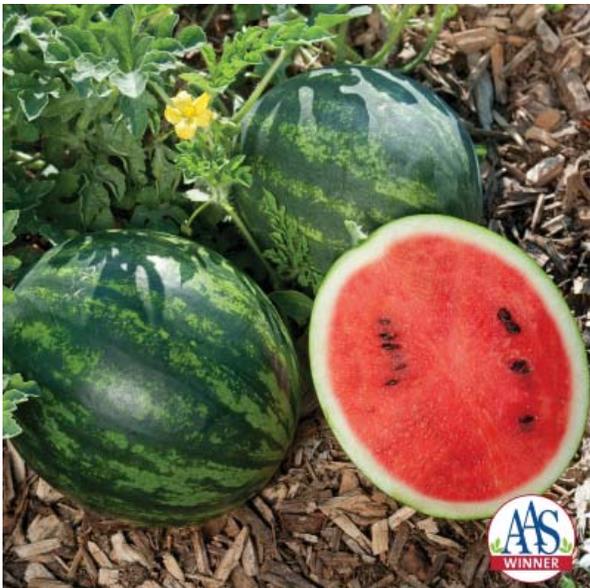
for years for this true red color in zinnias!" Gardeners will find many uses for the true red zinnia that's easy to grow and a favorite of pollinators. Uniform plants and outstanding garden performance. Zinnia Profusion

will ultimately grow up to 14 inches tall and 24 inches wide. However, in cooler northern climates, with a shorter growing season, the plants often are smaller. The Profusion Double series is highly disease tolerant, but

cool temperatures (below 60°F) induces disease problems; especially under wet and rainy conditions. Poorly drained soil or overwatering induces root disease.

AAS Vegetable Award Winner: Watermelon 'Mini Love'

This personal-sized Asian watermelon is perfect for smaller families and smaller gardens. Shorter vines (3-4 feet) still produce up to six fruits per plant and can be grown in smaller spaces. Several judges commented on the crack and split resistant rinds, important for reducing crop loss. For culinary purposes, this



deep red fleshed watermelon has a thin but strong rind that can be carved into attractive shapes for fruit salad presentations. Mini Love has a high sugar content resulting in sweet and crisp, juicy flesh that will be a true summer delight for watermelon lovers.

Zinnia hybrida

Common name: Zinnia

Type: Flower from seed

Light Needs: Full to partial sun

Water Needs: Normal

Deadheading Recommended: No

Staking Required: No

Plant Habit: Mounded

Plant Height: 8-14 inches

Bloom Time: Late spring to frost

Bloom Color: Red

Bloom Size: 2.5 inches

Container: Yes

Pollinator Friendly: Yes

Weather Tolerance: Drought, heat, rain, wind

Garden Spacing: 24 inches

Closest comparisons on market: Profusion Cherry, Zahara Red

Citrullus lanatus

Common name: Asian watermelon

Season Type: Warm season

Plant habit: Compact, vining

Plant Spread: 36 x 36 inches

Garden spacing: 3-4 feet

Days to harvest (transpl): 70

Fruit color (harvest): Light green with dark stripes

Fruit Shape: Round to oval

Fruit Weight: 7-9 pounds

Fruit Flavor Description: Sweet, refreshing, few seeds

Fruits/Plant: 4-6

Disease Resistance or Tolerance: Intermediate resistance to Anthracnose

Closest comparisons on market: 'Shiny Boy', 'Brush Sugar Baby'

The **Regional Winners** for our area for 2017 are:

AAS Regional Flower Award Winner: *Penstemon barbatus* Twizzle Purple (Southeast, Heartland)

Vibrant purple blooms present a new and unique color in penstemon! Twizzle Purple was judged as a first-year flowering perennial by judges who were impressed with the upright plant habit and superb flowering performance. This North American



native blooms profusely with 1-inch tubular flowers on long slender stalks that grow up to 35 inches high, making this beauty a magnet for pollinators from mid- to late summer. Twizzle Purple can be used to add height to combination planters or in landscapes for high-impact color

Penstemon barbatus

Common name: Penstemon

Type: Flower from seed

Hardiness Zone: Zone 5 to 8

Light Needs: Full to partial sun

Water Needs: Dry to normal

Deadheading Recommended: Y

Staking Required: No

Plant Habit: Upright

Plant Height: 35 inches

Bloom Time: Late spring - summer

Bloom Color: Purple

Bloom Size: 1 inch tubular flower

Container: Yes

Pollinator Friendly: Yes

Weather Tolerance: Cold, rain

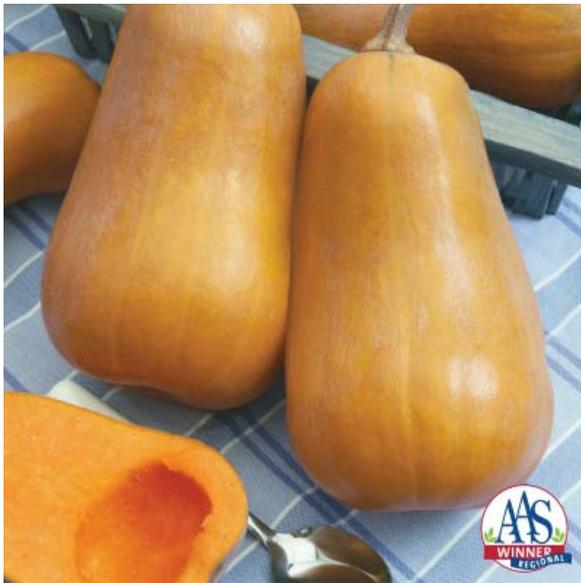
Garden Spacing: 12 inches

Closest comparisons on market:

Penstemon barbatus coccineus

AAS Regional Vegetable Award Winner: Squash 'Honeybaby' (Southeast, Heartland)

Honeybaby is a very productive variety of winter squash producing numerous fruits on a compact plant. These shorter vines grow 2-3 feet in a semi-bush habit showing great garden vigor. Short, wide fruits are slightly larger, sweet and nutty and meatier than similar comparison varieties. Honeybaby is delicious steamed, baked or made into soups and stews.



Cucurbita moschata

Common name: Winter squash

Season Type: Warm season

Plant habit: Bushy, compact, trailing, vining

Plant Spread: 2 feet

Garden spacing: 2-3 feet

Days to harvest (seed): 90

Fruit color (harvest): Orange

Fruit Shape: Light bulb shaped

Fruit Size: 6-7 inches

Fruit Weight: .25-.50 pounds

Fruit Flavor Description: Sweet, nutty

Fruits/Plant: 8-9

Disease Resistance or Tolerance: PM tolerance, crack resistant

Closest comparisons on market:

Honeynut, Butterscotch

Additional Information:

🟩 All America Selections at www.all-americanselections.org/