

Front Lines

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New AAS Winners for 2018

Ellen C. Wells

We are only halfway through 2017 and All-America Selections is already thinking ahead to 2018. The AAS judges have wrung tons of yet-to-be-released varieties through the wringer and have thus far chosen three to earn the coveted AAS Winner designation. All three were given the “National” award, too—this means they’ve outcompeted similar varieties throughout the country.

Without further ado, the winners are:



Sweet Corn American Dream (edible winner): American Dream won on many fronts, including excellent germination, tender and super-sweet kernels, slightly earlier maturation and a “good tip fill” along the cob. Who doesn’t like that?! Bred by Illinois Foundation Seeds, Inc.

Ornamental Pepper Onyx Red (ornamental from seed winner): This vigorous grower is compact, well-branching and full of small and dark black leaves. Contrasting nicely with the foliage are tons of shiny red fruit. Staying cozy and compact, Onyx Red does well in beds, borders, containers and even in mass plantings. Bred by Takii & Co., Ltd.

Cocktail Tomato Red Racer (edible winner): Cocktail-sized tomatoes are larger than grape and cherry tomatoes, but smaller than a Roma, from what we understand. The attributes of Red Racer that garnered it an AAS award are its uniform fruits and a delicious sweet/acid balanced flavor. Red Racer is a compact, determinate plant that produces loads of fruit seven to 10 days earlier than its closest comparison variety—great for small spaces! Bred by EarthWork Seeds.

Expect to see them for sale as soon as the supply builds up. Bench cards and variety markers can be downloaded from the AAS website at all-americaselections.org; posters can be ordered from GardenCenterMarketing.com. GP