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Front Lines

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More AAS News: New Trials & Tech

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All-America Selections (AAS) has been around for nearly 90 years, but the organization hasn't become complacent. Instead, it's adopted new technology and adapted to create new trials to accommodate modern breeding.

First, the new trials. To understand what's new, you have to know the trials AAS currently holds. The existing trials are:

• Edibles from seed, in ground

• Ornamentals from seed, in ground (annuals and first-year flowering perennials)

• Ornamentals from vegetative cuttings, in containers (annuals and first-year flowering perennials)*

• Herbaceous perennials, in ground (three-year trial)

Those trials will continue to exist (with one renamed—see the asterisk), along with three new trials, which will be located at 24 sites to be announced at the end of September:

• Edibles from seed, in containers

• Ornamentals from seed, in containers

• Ornamentals from non-seed propagation methods, in ground (annuals and first-year flowering perennials)

* The name of this trial will change to Ornamentals from non-seed propagation methods, in containers.

Along with the new trials, there are a couple of rule changes for breeders. Any variety entered into the AAS trials will be allowed to be sold in the North American home garden market after entry. That means breeders can sell their variety while it's in trial. Breeders also can sell it as an exclusive while it's in trial, but if it wins an AAS award, it's not allowed to be an exclusive anymore.

AAS adopted new technology last year in the Mercado Trial App, which allows judges an easier way to record observations and input scores that can be transmitted quickly to the office for data collection. There also will be a new judge application and other additions to the breeder entry applications. Visit the AAS website at all-americaselections.org for more information. **GP**