

Front Lines

1/1/2021

Latest AAS Winners

Ellen C. Wells

Looking for new and outstanding varieties for your customers for 2021? All-America Selections has some suggestions in the form of four new AAS Winners for the new year. With two edibles, one perennial and one belonging to a superstar family of annuals and the first AAS Gold Medal winner in 16 years, there's something in this cohort for everyone.

Zinnia Profusion Red Yellow Bicolor (Gold Medal National Winner for Ornamentals from Seed). The new bicolor addition to the prolific and popular Profusion series, Red Yellow Bicolor gives a color show

throughout the season. It starts as a bold red center ring with golden yellow outer petals. As time goes on, the colors age into shades of apricot, salmon and dusty rose. Compact and floriferous, Red Yellow Bicolor produces new flowers developing over old so there's never a lack of color. Bred by Sakata Seed.

AAS's previous few AAS Gold Medal winners? Well, back in 2004, it was Celosia Fresh Look Red from Benary and before that it was Ornamental Millet Purple Majesty in 2003 (PanAmerican Seed). The Gold Medal winners in 1999 and 2001? Profusion Zinnias. That family's got some good genes, I'd say.

Echalion Crème Brulee (Regional Edible Winner in the Southeast, Great Lakes and West/Northwest regions). AAS's first winner in the shallot category, Crème Brulee is easy to peel, with bright coppery-pink outer skin and a rosy purple interior. The bulbs are sweet and tender, and mature earlier than comparison varieties. Easy to grow from seed, too. Bred by Bejo Seeds.

Pepper Pot-a-peño (Regional Edible Winner in the Great Lakes and West/Northwest regions). This is a jalapeño with a compact habit that's perfect for containers and hanging baskets. It produces plenty of small traditionally spicy fruits. The longer they're held on the plant, the more red and sweeter they become. A unique feature is that the peppers hang down, making it easier to harvest without damaging the dense foliage canopy. Bred by PanAmerican Seed.

Leucanthemum Sweet Daisy Birdy (Regional Perennial Winner in the Mountain/Southwest region). Sweet Daisy Birdy is a robust perennial with long-lasting flowers. It showed great cold and heat tolerance in national trials and kept a tidy habit. Flowers are large (5 in.), pure white and early to bloom. Medium (18- to 24-in.) height and hardy to Zone 3. Bred by Dümme Orange. **GP**

