

Pretty new plants easy to grow

Perhaps you have your shopping list made and are ready to head to the garden centers this week to see what's being offered. Check out the hydrangeas.

Many of us have enjoyed Annabelle hydrangeas (*Hydrangea arborescens*), which are easy to grow and virtually maintenance-free. The stems are cut down in late winter or early spring and the shrub comes back with a multitude of stems bearing white ball-shape flower heads that later turn to lime green.



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This spring, a new pink Annabelle hydrangea named Invincibelle Spirit will be available. The flower, introduced by the Proven Winners brand, opens a dark hot pink and matures to a rich, soft pink. This plant requires full sun to partial shade and blooms again without cutting off old flowers.

Or maybe you'll be looking for a new rose. For several years, low-maintenance roses have been available.

Recently, the Oso Easy series was introduced. These roses are resistant to blackspot, have glossy, dark-green foliage, and require minimal maintenance.

Several bear flowers that open one color and fade to another.

For example, Oso Easy Peachy Cream produces peach-colored blooms that fade to a cream. Oso Easy Fragrant Spreader is a low



PROVEN WINNERS

Invincibelle Spirit, a new pink variety of *Hydrangea arborescens*, will be available in garden centers this summer.

ground-cover plant with single pink blooms that fade to white.

If you are looking for other good shrubs, visit the Proven Winners ColorChoice Web site at www.colorchoiceplants.com.

Also check out the Proven Winners site at www.provenwinners.com and hover over "Plants" to see what's new this season.

You're bound to find something you have to have.

Growing Easter lilies

Although the Easter lily (*Lilium longiflorum*) is produced to be a disposal florist plant, some gardeners like the challenge of re-growing it.

After it finishes blooming, cut off the old flowers and maintain the foliated stems in a sunny, fairly cool location.

Water regularly.

In mid- to late May, plant it outside in a sunny well-drained location with the top of the bulb about 6 inches below the soil surface. The leafy stalk will turn brown in a few weeks as the bulb goes into a resting phase.

By late summer, a new stalk will appear and perhaps flower. The bulb is not considered reliably hardy in Ohio, so in the fall, cover the area with a 2- to 3-inch layer of straw, chopped leaves or bark mulch — and hope for a mild winter.

If the plant survives, it will bloom again.

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