

Geranium – A gardener's favorite

By Shelly Breitenbach, Garden Country

No matter what color palette your heart desires, there is one plant that has always been a gardener's favorite: the Geranium. Due to their constant color, geraniums have been the work horse of gardens for years. Two new award winning varieties are Americana Dark Red and Caliente Orange.

Americana Dark Red Geranium is an exceptional zonal variety. Noted for its brilliant dark, velvety red blooms atop lush medium green foliage, one glance leaves no doubt why this beauty was voted Best of Show at 2009 CSU last summer. It has a mounding habit reaching 12-18 inches high and 15-8 inches wide. Americana Dark Red's exceptional form can stand alone or will grace any planting or container garden.

Caliente Orange geranium has been



Americana Dark Red



Caliente Orange

awarded the Medal of Excellence and voted Best of Show at 2009 Colorado State University. This prolific bloomer boasts vivid orange flowers that resist fading in the heat. Caliente is an ivy-zonal hybrid geranium, leading to an ivy form that also spreads. It works great in hanging baskets, containers or in the ground. Caliente Orange blends beautifully with wave petunias and lantana. This combination thrives in hot spots and is popping with color.

Both Americana and Caliente require at least a half day sun, but will hold up in all day sun like a trooper! Geraniums thrive with moderate water, but are heavy feeders. For optimal performance: fertilize every two weeks with a water-soluble 20-20-20 or a time-released fertilizer every four-six weeks. Be sure to ask your local nursery professional for tips on the right fertilizer for you. To encourage more profuse blooming, when the flowers have faded, follow the stalk down and snap it off at the base.

For info, go to www.GardenCentersofColorado.org.