

# Hoosier Gardener

 Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp

## Plants, seeds of All-America Selections winners to be immediately available

By Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp, on January 16th, 2010



'Twinny Peach' snapdragon. All photos courtesy All-America Selections

All-America Selections has changed its introduction schedule of new plants for gardeners.

Effective this year, the flowers and vegetables declared **AAS Winners** will be available through all distribution channels, from breeder to grower to retailer to consumer at the time of their announcement. In the past, it sometimes took years for the winners to work their way to the consumer because seed may have been in short supply or other factors.

Popular AAS winners from the past include 'Lady in Red' salvia, 'Siam Queen' basil and 'Big Beef' tomato.



'Moonsong Deep Orange' marigold.

Each AAS Winner has been grown and evaluated for several seasons in trial gardens throughout the United States. Besides new, unusual or improved attributes, the plants must meet the new availability

standards, said Diane Blazek, the newly appointed executive director of All-America Selections and the **National Garden Bureau**. (See below for AAS Display Gardens in Indiana.)

The changes are in response to concerns raised by consumers and garden writers about the lack of availability of some of the winners, she said.



'Endurio Sky Blue Martien' viola.

In another change for the organization, AAS winners will be announced three times a year rather than all at one, Blazek said. Look for announcements in late fall, winter and summer.

Here's a list of this year's winners. Seeds or plants should be available this spring in garden centers and mailorder or online retailers. If you don't find it in your favorite printed catalog, check its online listing because the plants may have been announced too late for publication, she said.

#### Perennials



'PowWow Wild Berry' purple coneflower.



'Mesa Yellow' blanket flower.

'PowWow Wild Berry' coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*). Retains flower color for long period and improved branching habit.

'Mesa Yellow' blanket flower (*Gaillardia x grandiflora*). Does not get tall, loose or floppy.

#### Annuals

'Moonsong Deep Orange' marigold (*Tagetes erecta*). Fade resistant flowers.

'Twinny Peach' snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus*). First double compact snap.

'Endurio Sky Blue Martien' viola (*Viola cornuta*). Spreading, mounding habit.



Double Zahara Cherry zinnia.



Double Zahara Fire zinnia.



Zahara Starlight Rose zinnia.

Double Zahara 'Cherry,' Double Zahara 'Fire' and Zahara 'Starlight Rose' zinnias (*Zinnia*). Resistant to leaf spot and powdery mildew. I grew Starlight Rose last summer and loved it.



'Shiny Boy' watermelon.

#### **Vegetable/fruit**

'Shiny Boy' watermelon (*Citrullus lanatus*). High yield, 20-pound melons with sweet tropical flavor.

Indiana has no trial gardens, but there are four display gardens where you can see many AAS Winners: **Hamilton County Master Gardener** Garden, 2003 E. Pleasant St., Noblesville; **Fort Wayne; Master Gardener** Demonstration Garden at Foster Park, 3900 Old Mill Road, Fort Wayne;

**Southwestern Indiana Master Gardener** Demonstration Gardens, 3501 E. Lloyd Expressway, Evansville, and **Tippecanoe County Master Gardener Association** Garden, 3150 Sagamore Parkway South, Lafayette.

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