



Award-winning flowers suited for our climate

Written by Jennie Hagen, guest columnist November 24, 2009 03:13 pm

The 2010 winners for the All American Selections have just been announced and it looks like all four of the flowers will do well in our region.

Vegetable selections will be announced later.

The four flowers are gaillardia "Mesa Yellow," snapdragon "Twinny Peach," viola "Endurio Sky Blue Martien" and zinnia "Zahara Starlight Rose," a delightful double-petaled selection with red rose-centered stars in a background of white and yellow cone centers. Selections can be name requested at area retailers starting next spring.

For a list of seed sources, send an email to gardenanswers@live.com and I will send it to you. Space does not permit a full listing here.

Looks like the first, and perhaps the final, cutting of spinach will be today from our little greenhouse experiment. It is just too cold to hope for more, although we'll keep the heat lamp on the pots for a while longer. The peas are actually doing quite well for November. They are about 4 inches high, but still no sign of blossoms.

We also placed the planter with the rosemary blooming inside the greenhouse and it's still flowering.

Hopefully many more of you readers have similar success stories to share. Season extenders can be as easy as our little portable greenhouse, sunken cold frames, insulated permanent greenhouses or a sunny porch or sunroom to keep things growing. Although night temperatures will routinely be at or near freezing, your plants in protected areas such as these will obviously need to be watered. Watering with lukewarm water will allow the plants to absorb moisture faster than if you use cold water straight from the garden hose.

Pruning flowering trees and shrubs should be on your spring gardening agenda. Most trees and shrubs will appreciate and thrive on being pruned in very late winter prior to spring growth. Don't forget though, for fruiting canes, such as rasp and blackberries, this past summer's fruiting canes are the ones to prune out. They will not bear fruit again next year. For additional information and an excellent source for gardening material, visit Oregon State University Extension website at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu>. "Www" is not needed to reach their site. There you will also find a link to Northwest Gardener e-news if you are interested in reading or subscribing electronically.

I've received several requests for clarification of common, but oftentimes, confusing horticultural terminology. A select few of these words will be included in Garden Guide as space permits. For this week we have:

- Annual. This is a plant that goes from seed to blossom and or fruiting in one year, or season. Examples are marigolds, larkspur and zinnias, or zucchini and corn (most vegetables are annuals).
- Perennial. This is a plant that will live for two or more years. Examples range from roses to delphiniums and many types of ornamental grasses.
- Biennial. This is a plant that will routinely die after it's second year of growth, or one that will not bloom until it's second year, the most common being "Sweet William" (*Dianthus barbatus*).

Many plants will exhibit a combination of these types in different growing conditions. In areas where soil routinely freezes solid over winter, tender perennials will revert to an annual nature and need to be replanted yearly. As a general rule, any plant with a USDA Hardiness of 7 or higher will not reliably survive in Union County over winter. There are exceptions, but few.

Until next time, hopefully you are enjoying thoughts of next year's growing and perusing all the seed catalogs arriving.



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