



## All America Selection Winners for 2019 Will Be Hits in Your Garden Too!

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Each year [All America Selection winners](#) are announced. This non-profit organization which began in 1932, has established trial gardens throughout the United States and even as far north as Canada. New varieties, species or strains of annuals, vegetables and bedding plants are grown and judged on their performance. Those chosen as winners are outstanding plants and deserve a trial in your gardens as well.

In 2019, 3 flowers from seed and 3 vegetables were chosen as national All America Selection Winners. Two of them, begonia ‘Viking XL Red on Chocolate’ and petunia ‘Wave Carmine Velour’ would need to be started indoors in late winter so probably it would be easier to just purchase plants come spring.

‘Viking XL Red on Chocolate’, pictured at left, has unique deep bronzy brown leaves that seem to intensify the tone of the vibrant red flowers that cover the plant. Plants reach about 30 inches high and have a mounded habit. They bloom in part to full sun and will tolerate heat well. The one-inch blossoms continue right up until frost. Neither staking nor deadheading is required. These begonias can be used in containers or as bedding plants.



Wave petunia ‘Carmine Velour’ has large 2 to 2 ½ inch flowers of a striking carmine rose color. Like other Wave cultivars, plants grow about 8 inches tall but spread 3 to 4 feet across so they make great, colorful groundcovers. Space plants 12 to 24 inches apart in full sun or use in hanging baskets or other containers. Flowers are so prolific little, if any dead-heading is needed.

Marigold ‘Big Duck Gold’ reaches only 11 to 15 inches high but has huge, 3-inch large, golden-yellow flowers. Seed can be started indoors or directly into the garden once the danger of frost is past. Plants will likely be available at local garden centers this spring. Plants show good tolerance to heat and rain. Flowers continue to be produced all season long on bushy plants with attractive dark green foliage.

Nasturtium ‘Baby Rose’ was a regional winner for the Northeast as well as the Heartland and Mountain/Southwest. The seeds of this selection can also be planted directly in the soil or in containers, or

started in pots indoors. Plants have a 12-inch compact form less prone to flopping open. The 2-inch blossoms hold up to drought, heat, cold, rain and wind, are attractive to pollinators and enjoy a full to partially sunny site.

Snacking peppers are becoming a popular garden or container item and this year pepper 'Just Sweet' with its 3-inch fruits was selected as a national AAS winner. The stocky, upright plants that grow about 3 feet tall do not require staking. Fruits are a vivid yellow and have been described as possessing an exceptionally sweet flavor – perfect for salads or snacking. They should be ready for picking 65 to 75 days after transplanting into the garden.



It's hard to believe but AAS judges reported more than 500 light yellow to cream tomatoes on 'Fire Fly', pictured at right. The fruit is smaller than a cherry tomato but larger than that of a currant tomato. Indeterminate plants require staking as they will reach 5 to 6 feet tall. Plants have good disease resistance and you can start picking 80 days from transplanting.

Another fantastic tomato to try this year would be 'Red Torch'. It is a striped oblong tomato said to have excellent flavor, high yields and great texture. 'Red Torch' is also an indeterminate variety growing 5 to 6 feet so it would require staking. The bright red fruit is streaked with yellow. Fruits are about 1 ½ inch long and plants have excellent tolerances to both biotic and abiotic stresses. Fruits start ripening 60 to 70 days after transplanting.

A new melon cultivar was a Northeast & Southeast regional winner. Melon 'Orange Silver Wave' is an exotic cultivar from South Korea. Each plant can produce up to 6 5-inch attractive fruit. The melons can be eaten fresh, in a fruit salad or used as a smoothie ingredient. Seed can be sown after the danger of frost is past or indoors. Give plants some space as they may spread 6 feet or so. While staking is not essential, keeping the fruit off the ground with a trellis or other support will reduce the incidence of diseases.

Do check out the 2019 All America Selections. They will surely be a winner in your gardens too.

For more information about this or past year's All America Selection winners or the non-profit organization, visit their [site](#). For your other gardening questions, feel free to contact us at (877) 486-6271 or [www.ladybug.uconn.edu](http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu) or your local Cooperative Extension Center.