



## All-America Selection Winners for 2025

by Dawn Pettinelli, UConn Home & Garden Education Center

Each winter the All-America Selection winners are announced. This non-profit organization 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.

This year's national winners include 3 vegetables and 5 flowers. 'Green Lightening' is a very attractive, striped pattypan squash that tastes as good as it looks. The 5-inch or so fruits weigh in at 1 to 2 pounds and are ready to pick about 50 days after planting from seed. Judges marveled at the abundant yields on these 2 feet high, bushy plants.



Kohlrabi 'Konstance' Image by all-americaelections.org

[Kohlrabi 'Konstance'](#) exudes a vibrant purple color as well as a sweet, crunchy texture. A curious but easy to grow and tasty addition to the vegetable garden, this kohlrabi matures at just 42 days from seed. Upright plants, about a foot high, produce round, purple 4 to 5-inch 'bulbs' that can be eaten fresh or served roasted or sauteed. Fruits are crack-resistant and plants resistant to several diseases.

[Sweet pepper 'Pick-N-Pop Yellow'](#) produces adorable, snack-size, extra sweet mini peppers. The pointed, conical fruits are about 4 inches long springing from compact 2-foot-tall plants. The prolific harvest begins about 65 days after transplanting. This variety shows great resistance to bacterial leaf spot.

One can never have too many dahlias and this year's AAS winner, ['Black Forest Ruby'](#) is a gem that can be started from seed. Since this variety is an octoploid (having 8 times the normal chromosome number) there is much variability in flower shape (ranging from single to double), plant height and structure. Most will be upright about 2 feet high with jet black foliage and ruby-red flowers. You can save tubers from the best-looking plants.

[Dianthus 'Interspecific Capitan™ Magnifica'](#) with its impressive bicolor pink and white frilly blooms looks as good in the garden as it does in a vase. Plus, the more you cut, the more blooms appear. Summer heat tolerance was impressive with the 2-inch flower heads also standing up to rain and cold. Plants range from 1 to 1 ½ feet tall and bloom all summer. Look for these vegetatively propagated plants at your local garden center.

Sunny sites will positively shimmy when planted with [marigold Mango Tango](#). This rich red and primrose yellow bicolor blooms all summer long even without deadheading. Reaching only 8 to 10 inches in height makes it perfect for edging garden beds, containers or window boxes. Seeds can be started indoors and plants set out after the danger of frost has passed. Fertilize and water regularly for bountiful blooms.

Can there be too many petunias? [‘Petunia Shake™ Raspberry’](#) will convince you that there’s always room for one more. The fantastic flowers are reminiscent of a blended raspberry milkshake swirled with lemon-lime green sorbet. The 5 to 8 inch mounded plants can do front of the border duty, serve as groundcovers or billow over hanging baskets. Plants will bloom about 70 days from seed and hold up to heat and rain.



*Snapdragon ‘DoubleShot™ Yellow Red Heart’ Image by all-americanselections.org*

I’ve never thought of snapdragons as fragrant, yet [‘DoubleShot™ Yellow Red Heart’](#) is said to have an amazing candy-like scent. Aside from this unusual trait, Yellow Red Heart promises to delight with vibrant yellow blossoms with a red throat that start early and continue through to a heavy frost. This snapdragon reaches about 20 inches in height with semi-double 1 to 1 ½ inch blooms produces all season long and able to tolerate light frosts.

Four regional 2025 Ornamental Winners well suited to the Northeast, include one petunia and 3 nasturtiums. If you’re looking for a vibrant pink petunia great for bedding and containers, try [‘Dekko™ Maxx™ Pink’](#). The vibrant pink 1 to 1 ½ inch starry blooms are produced all season long and hold up well to rain and heat.

Nasturtiums are top performers in garden beds and containers and are noted for their hummingbird attraction and edible leaves and flowers. New colors in the Baby series of nasturtiums to try out this year might be [‘Baby Gold’](#), [‘Baby Red’](#) and [‘Baby Yellow’](#). All can be grown from seed and start blooming about 50 days after sowing. Two-inch blooms cover compact 12-inch-high mounded plants. Colors are intense and plants stand up to drought, heat, cold, rain and wind. Considering our fluctuating summer weather, these are sure to do well both in the garden and in containers.

Check out these and past AAS winners. They were chosen because of their remarkable characteristics and they are sure to be winners in your yard too.

For your gardening questions, feel free to contact us, toll-free, at the UConn Home & Garden Education Center at (877) 486-6271, visit our website at [www.homegarden.cahnr.uconn.edu](http://www.homegarden.cahnr.uconn.edu) or contact your local Cooperative Extension center.