

All-America Selections Mission/Purpose

MISSION STATEMENT

"To promote new garden seed varieties with superior garden performance judged in impartial trials in North America."

PURPOSE To test new, unsold cultivars, to inform gardeners about the AAS Winners, to earn gardeners' trust in the AAS Winners

All-America Selections History

Before AAS, in the 1920's and 30's, consumer magazine editors knew little about new garden varieties and had few resources to obtain reliable information. Articles as a result might be misleading or incorrect. The "Garden Club" movement was in its infancy and needed material. Home, farm seed and florist magazines all were hungry for garden news.

In 1932, W. Ray Hastings was president of the Southern Seedsmen's Association of Atlanta, Georgia. He proposed the idea of All-America Selections as a way for home gardeners to learn which new varieties are truly improved. To do so, he encouraged all seed companies to set up trial grounds, cooperatively test new varieties and agree to develop marketing efforts for new vegetables and flowers.

Mr. Hastings recommended a national network of trial grounds throughout North American climates where flower and vegetable varieties would be grown and assessed by skilled, impartial judges. The seed trials would accept only new, previously unsold varieties.

AAS was founded in 1932 and the first AAS Winners were announced a year later, after the results were tabulated for the first trial. AAS Winners have been introduced each year since 1933. In 1934, there were 30 AAS Award Winning new varieties introduced, a record number. There have not been that many AAS Winners introduced since 1934.

AAS Trials have been conducted every year since 1932. The number of Judges and sites may vary, but the trials are conducted each year. In 1984 the AAS Board of Directors decided to simplify the award system and award only two types. There is an AAS Gold Medal award reserved for a breeding breakthrough. Gold Medal Awards have been rare, only given once or twice a decade. The other AAS Award recognizes a flower or vegetable for significant achievements, proven to be superior to all others on the market.

AAS does not advertise the AAS Award Winners. AAS relies upon a public relations program to inform gardeners about AAS Winners that are announced each September. Consumer magazines, newspapers, garden club bulletins and cooperative extension agents are depended upon to introduce AAS Winners to home gardeners.

AAS continues as the oldest, most established international testing organization in North America.

AAS Winners:

2009—Viola F1 'Rain Blue and Purple'
Eggplant F1 'Gretel'
Melon F1 'Lambkin'
Squash F1 'Honey Bear'

AAS Display Gardens:

U of MN Display and Trial Garden, St Paul—flowers and vegetables
Lyndale Park Gardens, Minneapolis--flowers

This information is taken directly from the AAS website:

<http://www.all-americaselections.org/Default.asp>

Happy Gardening, Jennifer Porwit