

2003 Garden Flower Trials

Results of Annual Flower Evaluations by Kentucky Master Gardeners

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Annual and perennial garden flowers have been evaluated for many years at the University of Kentucky. Trials have occurred at the University of Kentucky Arboretum since 1993. These trials were expanded at the Horticulture Research Farm in 1999 and 2000 with grants from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the Kentuckiana Greenhouse Association and the USDA New Crop Opportunities Center.

Demonstration gardens have been established at eight locations across the state. We wish to thank the Extension agents and Master Gardeners at these garden locations for planting, maintaining and evaluating the annual flowers in these trials.

- Purchase Area Master Gardener Garden, Paducah
- UK West Kentucky Research and Education Center, Princeton
- Warren Co. Master Gardener Garden, Bowling Green
- Hardin Co. Master Gardener Garden, Elizabethtown
- Louisville Zoo, Louisville
- UK Arboretum, Lexington
- Boone Co. Master Gardener Garden, Burlington
- Campbell Co. Master Gardener Garden, Highland Heights
- Pulaski Co. Master Gardener Garden, Somerset
- Wayne Co. Master Gardener Garden, Monticello
- Russell Co. Master Gardener Garden, Russell Springs

Please take some time next year to visit these trial and demonstration gardens:

Selected annual flowers were grown in Lexington and distributed to the demonstration gardens in May. The Master Gardeners and Extension

agents planted the flowers in their trial garden and evaluated them four times during the summer (mid July, early August, late August, mid September). All gardens were mulched with wood chip mulch; drip irrigation was used throughout the summer and plants were fertilized during the summer. Plant performance was evaluated on a 1 to 5 scale with 1 = poor and 5 = excellent. The evaluation was based only on the individual gardener's determination of the quality of the plants. Although personal tastes are reflected in individual evaluations, the overall evaluation was accurate for the plant performance in each garden. The demonstration gardens seem to be a good educational activity for the Master Garden educational program. It is the goal of this program to allow Master Gardeners to see new flowers and compare them to the reliable annual flowers seen in Kentucky gardens.

A few plants performed poorly in the 2003 trials. Sunflowers and ornamental millet were too old at transplanting. We knew this was a potential problem, but learned that the seed must be sown only 20-25 days before transplant. The situation was somewhat similar for 'Apricot Brandy' celosia. Celosia can be one of the best flowers in Kentucky gardens, but it is difficult to grow when plants are too old. This year's trial shows that plants need to be younger than 6 weeks at transplanting to get appropriate garden performance.

Photos and details about plant performance are continually added to the Kentucky Garden Flowers web site:

<http://www.uky.edu/Ag/Horticulture/gardenflowers> or simply go to the UK home page (www.uky.edu) and search for a plant name and you will be directed to the Kentucky Garden Flowers location.

Vinca -- ‘Cooler Hot Rose’	<i>Catharanthus roseus</i>	4.58
Lantana -- ‘Weeping Lavender’	<i>Lantana camara</i>	4.40
Spreading Petunia -- ‘Tidal Wave Purple’	<i>Petunia x hybrida</i>	4.40
Verbena -- ‘Temari Patio Blue’	<i>Verbena</i>	4.40
Vinca -- ‘Cooler Lavender Halo’	<i>Catharanthus roseus</i>	4.32
Zinnia -- ‘Profusion Orange’	<i>Zinnia</i>	4.31
Lantana -- ‘Patriot Sunburst’	<i>Lantana camara</i>	4.22
Vinca -- ‘Cooler Deep Orchid’	<i>Catharanthus roseus</i>	4.09
Cupflower -- ‘Summer Splash’	<i>Nierembergia hippomanica</i>	4.00
Sweet William -- ‘Amazon Purple’	<i>Dianthus barbatus</i>	4.14
Cigar Flower -- ‘Tiny Mice’	<i>Cuphea llavea</i>	4.00
Sweet William -- ‘Amazon Cherry’	<i>Dianthus barbatus</i>	3.94
Bedding Begonia -- ‘Olympia Sprint Mix’	<i>Begonia semperflorens-cultorum</i>	3.59
Zinnia -- ‘Benary Giant Golden Yellow’	<i>Zinnia elegans</i>	3.16
Ornamental Millet -- ‘Purple Majesty’	<i>Pennisetum glaucum</i>	3.14
Wishbone Flower -- ‘Summer Wave Amethyst’	<i>Torenia fournieri</i>	3.04
Zinnia -- ‘Benary Giant Deep Red’	<i>Zinnia elegans</i>	2.74
Cockscomb -- ‘Apricot Brandy’ EARLY (sown 2-27-03)	<i>Celosia plumosa</i>	2.58
Cockscomb -- ‘Apricot Brandy’ LATE (sown 3-25-03)	<i>Celosia plumosa</i>	2.28
Sunflower -- ‘Moonbright’	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	1.68
Sunflower -- ‘Sunbright’	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	1.68

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