



# North Dakota Home Garden Variety Trials

SUMMARY  
2018

NDSU

EXTENSION

# Summary of Results

A team of volunteers in North Dakota and surrounding states/provinces evaluated promising vegetable and cut flower varieties. In a year marked by dry conditions in spring, gardeners at 243 sites rated varieties for health, earliness, yield and food/ornamental quality. A total of 1,201 side-by-side comparisons were submitted.

In each trial they noted which of the two varieties they preferred (Pref) and which of the varieties they

would recommend (Rec) to other gardeners. They rated the performance of each variety using a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 = poor and 10 = excellent. The mean rating is presented in this summary.

The following is a summary of data, including our conclusions for each trial. Additional data and comments from gardeners are in the full report available at <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/homegardenvarietytrials/>.



## Bean, Dark Green Snap

'Jade II' pods were dark green, straight and flavorful. Its plants were more vigorous under the dry conditions, leading to a longer harvest period. 'Hickok' germinated well and produced good yields early in the season.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
Hickok	29	60	6.93
Jade II	71	60	7.47
			(17 sites)



## Bean, Green Snap

New 'Greenfield' rated slightly higher than 'Bush Blue Lake 274' for all traits. It grew better, was ready to harvest earlier, produced higher yields and tasted better for more gardeners. Its pods were thinner, longer, less seedy and bright green.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
B. Blue Lake 274	48	52	6.55
Greenfield	52	67	7.44
			(28 sites)



## Bean, Green Filet

Both performed well but 'Crockett' was exceptional. Gardeners loved its dark green, smooth, straight and slender pods. Vines of both varieties were healthy and productive. 'Calima' produced earlier and its pods were lighter green.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Calima	30	70	7.54
Crockett	70	85	8.43
			(50 sites)



## Bean, Green Pole

New 'Seychelles' was ready to harvest much earlier. The vines of 'Stringless Blue Blake S-7' were more vigorous, and its yields were higher and more consistent across sites. Gardeners enjoyed the pod quality of both varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Seychelles	70	82	7.00
S. Blue Lake S-7	30	45	6.73
			(18 sites)



## Bean, Vegetable Soybean

'Tohya' was superior. It matured earlier and produced higher yields. Every gardener in the trial recommended it. 'Midori Giant' matched 'Tohya' for the appearance and taste of its pods but showed no clear advantage.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Midori Giant	25	50	5.50
Tohya	75	100	8.25
			(7 sites)



## Bean, Yellow Filet

'Borsalino' was preferred. Gardeners were impressed by its outstanding germination, earlier maturity, and straight, bright yellow pods. Both varieties were healthy and produced good yields. Gardeners were split on their taste preferences.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Borsalino	60	69	7.88
Soleil	40	69	7.56
			(18 sites)



### Beet, Gold

‘Boldor’ showed better germination, but that was it. ‘Golden Detroit’ was ready to harvest earlier and produced higher yields. Gardeners liked the looks of its bright golden roots. Both varieties were healthy and delicious.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
Boldor	44	67	7.44
Golden Detroit	56	89	8.00
			(16 sites)



### Beet, Red

‘Boro’ and ‘Merlin’ were very similar. Gardeners liked the smoothness of ‘Boro’ and the deep red color of ‘Merlin’. The most noticeable difference was in flavor. ‘Merlin’ was more delicious and that made all the difference.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Boro	41	59	7.18
Merlin	59	68	7.55
			(27 sites)



### Beet, Red Canning

‘Cylindra’ germinated better under the dry conditions, and this led to higher yields. ‘Cylindra’ showed an edge in earliness. There were no clear distinctions between the varieties in the appearance and taste of their roots.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Cylindra	68	87	7.96
Taunus	32	61	7.13
			(29 sites)



### Carrot, Early

Both varieties struggled to germinate in the dry soil. ‘Napoli’ showed greater vigor. It germinated better, grew faster and produced higher yields. ‘Yaya’ showed an edge in taste, and gardeners enjoyed its sweetness both raw and cooked.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Napoli	52	79	7.45
Yaya	48	64	7.00
			(48 sites)



### Carrot, Main Season

‘Goldfinger’ germinated much better and produced much higher yields. Gardeners enjoyed its long, smooth, cylindrical roots. Gardeners preferred ‘Goldfinger’ when carrots were eaten raw and preferred ‘Rodelika’ when cooked.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Goldfinger	63	77	7.43
Rodelika	37	43	6.30
			(57 sites)



### Carrot, Yellow

‘Yellowbunch’ roots were brighter and slimmer. More gardeners who ate raw carrots preferred ‘Yellowbunch’. Neither variety was especially flavorful. ‘Yellowstone’ roots were large, some exceeding 2 inches in diameter.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Yellowbunch	57	63	7.25
Yellowstone	43	63	7.00
			(10 sites)



### Corn, Bicolor Early

Half of the gardeners preferred ‘Sweetness’. It ripened quicker and tasted a little sweeter. The other half preferred ‘Temptation’. Its stalks showed good vigor. Gardeners enjoyed both varieties and no weaknesses were identified.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Sweetness	50	77	7.81
Temptation	50	73	7.59
			(22 sites)



### Corn, Bicolor Super Sweet

Most gardeners preferred ‘American Dream’. It ripened earlier and produced very attractive ears. Its stalks tolerated high winds better. ‘ACes’ showed good vigor and good yields. Gardeners enjoyed the taste of both varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
ACes	35	71	7.43
American Dream	65	81	7.62
			(23 sites)



### Corn, Yellow Super Sweet

‘SS3778R’ is known for its seedling vigor and it germinated well in our trials. Its stalks grew vigorously and produced delicious corn. ‘Vision MXR’ has done well in the past, but several gardeners noted 0% germination this year.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
SS3778R	75	75	7.25
Vision MXR	25	0	2.00
			(4 sites)



### Corn, Ornamental

‘Fiesta’ matured much earlier, produced higher yields and its ears were beautiful. Every gardener recommended it. ‘Autumn Explosion’ grew over 10 feet tall. Many gardeners felt its ears were more attractive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Autumn Expl’n	40	40	4.80
Fiesta	60	100	7.60
			(7 sites)



### Corn, Popcorn

‘Dakota Black’ produced good yields and was ready to harvest weeks earlier. Its black kernels were stunning and delicious. The stalks of ‘Robust 98114W’ were truly robust. These stalks produced larger ears but not higher yields.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Dakota Black	77	80	8.14
Robust 98114W	23	40	7.14
			(16 sites)



### Cucumber, Burpless

Fruits of both varieties were long, thin-skinned, small-seeded and never bitter. Their vines were healthy and productive. Many gardeners preferred ‘Summer Dance’ for its smooth-skinned and straight cukes. ‘Summer Top’ produced earlier.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Summer Dance	60	88	8.22
Summer Top	40	71	7.76
			(57 sites)



### Cucumber, Pickling

Gardeners liked the high yields and the extended harvest season of ‘Homemade Pickles’. Its cukes were perfect for pickling: crisp, tasty, small-seeded and blocky. ‘Alibi’ germinated well and matured earlier at several sites.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Alibi	37	71	7.57
Home. Pickles	63	81	7.95
			(45 sites)



### Cucumber, Slicing

Both varieties had healthy vines and produced an abundance of cucumbers. ‘Talladega’ produced the first cucumbers and produced higher yields in more gardens. Their fruit qualities were similar, and gardeners enjoyed both.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
General Lee	48	64	7.64
Talladega	52	77	7.59
			(27 sites)



### Lettuce, Butterhead

‘Buttercrunch’ germinated well, grew faster and resisted bolting better. Gardeners preferred its flavor and crunch. ‘Mirlo’ leaves were lighter green. It grew well but showed no advantage. Both varieties were healthy and productive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Buttercrunch	65	84	7.73
Mirlo	35	65	6.90
			(34 sites)



### Lettuce, Leaf

‘Bergam’s Green’ germinated better, was healthier and produced higher yields. It resisted bolting better. Its dark green, crumply leaves were attractive and tasty. ‘Salad Bowl’ did not germinate well in this trial.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Bergam’s Green	77	85	7.54
Salad Bowl	23	23	3.85
			(17 sites)



### Lettuce, Leaf/Romaine

‘Fusion’ germinated well, grew quickly and produced good yields. It showed amazing resistance to bolting. Gardeners enjoyed the looks, crunch and flavor of its ruffled leaves. ‘Concept’ grew well but was not superior in any way.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
Concept	24	59	6.92
Fusion	76	86	8.46
			(42 sites)



### Melon, Ananas

Gardeners enjoyed the flavor of Ananas melons. Most preferred ‘San Juan’. Its melons were larger, yet its yields were less consistent from site to site. ‘Dove’ was a more reliable producer and was recommended by more gardeners.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Dove	29	86	6.71
San Juan	71	57	7.00
			(7 sites)



### Melon, Early Cantaloupe

‘Goddess’ melons were larger, more attractive and tasted better. ‘Goddess’ ripened earlier. ‘Minnesota Midget’ germinated well. Its vines were compact but produced many more melons. These melons were much smaller in size.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Goddess	63	68	6.74
Minn. Midget	37	47	6.53
			(25 sites)



### Melon, Main Season Cantaloupe

Both varieties were healthy, productive and produced delicious fruits. ‘Aphrodite’ ripened earlier and produced larger melons. ‘Athena’ produced higher yields, and its melons tasted better to more gardeners.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Aphrodite	57	71	7.86
Athena	43	57	7.57
			(10 sites)



### Pea, Shell

‘Lincoln’ germinated better, matured earlier, and produced much higher yields over a longer season. Its pods were larger and easier to shell. Its peas tasted better. The semi-leafless vines of ‘Bountiful Ben’ vines were easy to harvest from.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Bountiful Ben	15	37	5.37
Lincoln	85	94	8.29
			(42 sites)



### Pea, Snap

‘Sugar Ann’ germinated better, was much healthier, produced earlier and produced higher yields. ‘Sugar Ann’ pods were sweeter, crisper and tasted better. The pods of ‘SL3123’ were larger and less stringy.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
SL3123	20	37	5.30
Sugar Ann	80	79	7.44
			(59 sites)



### Pumpkin, Small

‘Neon’ matured earlier and produced higher yields. Gardeners loved its precocious, bright orange color. Many gardeners recommended ‘Early Abundance’ but when asked to make a choice, nearly all preferred ‘Neon’.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Early Abundance	17	80	7.20
Neon	83	80	9.20
			(7 sites)



### Pumpkin, Medium

‘Early King’ has now outperformed ‘Howden’ and ‘Early Dakota Howden’. ‘Early King’ matured earlier and its pumpkins were bigger. Gardeners liked ‘Early Dakota Howden’ yields and the uniform size and shape of its fruits.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
E. Dak. Howden	45	73	7.20
Early King	55	82	7.20
			(15 sites)



### Pumpkin, Large

'Early Giant' pumpkins were bigger, matured earlier and were more attractive. Both varieties produced good yields. Some gardeners liked the barrel shape of 'Early Giant' pumpkins; others preferred the globular 'Gold Medal' fruits.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
Early Giant	79	88	7.93
Gold Medal	21	75	6.21
(19 sites)			



### Pumpkin, Ornamental Orange

Our data are limited, but most gardeners preferred 'Jack Be Little'. Its fruits were a little larger and more attractive. The vines of both varieties were healthy. More extensive testing is needed.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Jack Be Little	75	75	8.50
Jill Be Little	25	25	7.75
(5 sites)			



### Pumpkin, Ornamental Striped

'Blaze' germinated better, matured earlier and produced larger pumpkins. Its fruits were bright, attractive and uniform in size. Every gardener recommended it. 'Hooligan' grew well and matched the yields of 'Blaze'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Blaze	75	100	9.25
Hooligan	25	75	7.50
(4 sites)			



### Pumpkin, Ornamental White

Gardeners liked the bright white skin and uniform size of 'Casperita'. Its fruits were bigger, matured earlier and looked more attractive. Its vines were more vigorous, healthier and productive. 'Gooligan' was recommended by most growers.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Casperita	80	80	8.40
Gooligan	20	60	7.20
(5 sites)			



### Spinach, Smooth Leaf

Both varieties performed well but 'Space' was preferred. 'Space' resisted bolting longer, grew quickly and produced higher yields. It germinated better than 'Seaside'. There was no clear preference in the taste of the varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Seaside	39	64	7.14
Space	61	71	7.93
(39 sites)			



### Squash, Straightneck

The varieties were similar, and both produced an amazing amount of squash. In 2017, more gardeners preferred the fruit quality of 'Fortune', but gardeners this year gave the edge in fruit quality to 'Multipik'. Data are limited.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Fortune	50	100	8.50
Multipik	50	100	9.00
(2 sites)			



### Squash, Dark Green Zucchini

'Desert' produced higher yields and produced the first fruits at many gardens. More gardeners liked the looks of 'Raven' but preferred the taste of 'Desert'. Gardeners were overwhelmed with the productivity of both varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Desert	58	91	8.45
Raven	42	73	8.00
(13 sites)			



### Squash, Green Zucchini

'Spineless Beauty' vines were healthier, produced earlier and produced more zucchinis. Its skin was beautiful. Gardeners enjoyed the taste of both varieties but did not show a preference.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Cashflow	33	50	7.00
Spineless Beauty	67	100	8.17
(8 sites)			



### Squash, Winter Acorn

'Black Bellota' was the top variety in this trial, but gardeners did not express much enthusiasm for it or for 'Table Ace'. 'Black Bellota' vines grew well and produced satisfactory yields.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
Black Bellota	67	60	7.00
Table Ace	33	60	6.60
			(6 sites)



### Squash, Winter Buttercup/Kabocha

Gardeners were impressed with both varieties. Both varieties were healthy and productive. Slightly more gardeners recommended 'Bonbon'. There was no clear preference when assessing the appearance and taste of fruits.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Bonbon	50	86	8.00
Sweet Mama	50	75	7.50
			(40 sites)



### Squash, Winter Butternut

'Early Butternut' germinated better and had healthier plants. It yielded earlier and produced larger fruits. Gardeners were pleased with its yields. 'Pilgrim' was recommended by most gardeners, but the variety was not superior for any trait.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Early Butternut	79	85	8.29
Pilgrim	21	62	7.29
			(17 sites)



### Squash, Winter Orange Kabocha

'Sunshine' germinated better, grew better and produced higher yields. Its fruits were bright scarlet and attractive; its flesh was flavorful. 'Sunshine' was earlier. 'Mooregold' fruits did not fully ripen at many sites and few gardeners liked it.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Mooregold	14	14	5.71
Sunshine	86	71	7.43
			(10 sites)



### Watermelon, Red

Gardeners enjoyed both varieties and were split on their preferences. More gardeners reported 'Sangria' ripened earlier and produced higher yields. More gardeners felt 'Sweet Dakota Rose' was sweeter and tasted better.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Sangria	52	71	7.17
Sweet Dak. Rose	48	75	7.58
			(30 sites)



### Watermelon, Yellow

'Yellow Doll' melons tasted much sweeter, and its vines were more productive at more sites. Every gardener recommended it. 'Early Moonbeam' ripened earlier and has been a reliable variety in our trials for years.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Early Moonbeam	30	50	6.60
Yellow Doll	70	100	8.50
			(15 sites)



### Cosmos, Pink

Both varieties grew well, and their flowers were lovely. No clear differences were detected. 'Apollo Pink' produced more blooms at more sites. 'Sonata Pink' had an edge in vigor. Most gardeners preferred 'Sonata Pink'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Apollo Pink	45	75	7.33
Sonata Pink	55	75	7.58
			(12 sites)



### Cosmos, Striped

Gardeners liked both varieties. Their plants were healthy and bushy. Their blooms were beautiful in the garden. Most gardeners preferred 'Picotee'. They liked the vibrancy of its blooms. 'Candystripe' showed an edge in earliness and vigor.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Candystripe	42	63	6.74
Picotee	58	71	6.39
			(30 sites)



### Cosmos, White

Gardeners gave both varieties high scores. ‘Double Click White’ flowers were predominantly double and stood out more. It bloomed earlier. ‘Psyche White’ grew vigorously and bloomed prolifically.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
Double Click W.	70	100	9.00
Psyche White	30	80	8.30
			(14 sites)



### Sunflower, Bicolor

‘Helios Flame’ bloomed quickly, and its fiery colors made a bold statement in gardens. Its stalks were healthy and grew vigorously. ‘Ring of Fire’ had a more compact plant, and yet it produced more flowers.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Helios Flame	64	70	7.70
Ring of Fire	36	50	6.70
			(14 sites)



### Sunflower, Double Petal

Gardeners enjoyed these fluffy sunflowers. Every gardener recommended both varieties and they were split on their preferences. ‘Goldy Double’ germinated especially well, but no clear distinctions were detected between the varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Golden Cheer	50	100	8.00
Goldy Double	50	100	8.00
			(5 sites)



### Sunflower, Dwarf

‘Orange Hobbit’ was healthier and bloomed earlier. Its branches were filled with flowers, adding lots of color to the garden. It excelled as a cut flower. ‘Big Smile’ had a more compact plant and larger, more classic sunflowers.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Big Smile	42	42	5.92
Orange Hobbit	58	67	7.25
			(16 sites)



### Sunflower, Red

‘Moulin Rouge’ outperformed ‘Red Hedge’ in all traits. Its burgundy flowers were stunning and served as a beautiful background for other flowers. ‘Moulin Rouge’ bloomed prolifically, had sturdy stems and was a good cut flower.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Moulin Rouge	88	100	8.75
Red Hedge	13	63	7.00
			(10 sites)



### Sunflower, Strawberry

‘Strawberry Blonde’ stalks were sturdy, bloomed earlier and were filled with flowers. Its blooms were enchanting and lasted long as cut flowers. ‘Gypsy Charmer’ had deeper shades of red, but this variety was less vigorous.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Gypsy Charmer	18	47	5.82
Strawb. Blonde	82	88	7.59
			(21 sites)



### Sunflower, Tall

Gardeners liked both varieties. Their stalks grew about 10 feet tall and were attractive in the garden. ‘American Giant’ stalks were sturdy, and their flowers produced lots of seeds. More gardeners felt ‘Titan’ seeds were of higher quality.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
American Giant	50	86	8.17
Titan	50	86	7.83
			(11 sites)



### Zinnia, Orange

Both varieties were highly rated. Their flowers were large and set upon tall, sturdy stems. ‘Orange King’ was preferred by more gardeners, but neither variety showed any superiority on a consistent basis across sites.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Giant Dahlia O.	45	91	7.91
Orange King	55	91	8.48
			(23 sites)



## Zinnia, Purple

The flowers of ‘Giant Dahlia Violet’ were more numerous, brighter, more vibrant and more consistent in color. This variety was prettier in the garden and was a superior cut flower. ‘Purple Prince’ bloomed earlier at several sites.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
Giant Dahlia V. Purple Prince	71	86	8.51
	29	66	7.66
			(37 sites)



## Zinnia, White

‘Giant Dahlia White’ germinated better and produced more flowers. Gardeners liked its healthy plants and the fullness of its flowers. ‘Polar Bear’ performed well and was recommended by an equal number of gardeners.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
Giant Dahlia W. Polar Bear	70	70	7.80
	30	70	7.30
			(11 sites)

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Contact information:  
 Thomas Kalb, Ph.D.  
 North Dakota State University  
 2718 Gateway Avenue, Suite 304  
 Bismarck, ND 58503  
 701.328.9722  
 tom.kalb@ndsu.edu



The full report and more information on the North Dakota Home Garden Variety Trials Program is available at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/homegardenvarietytrials/](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/homegardenvarietytrials/).

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