



North Dakota Home Garden Variety Trials

2013
Summary

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Gardeners participated in 86 trials, each trial comparing two promising vegetable or flower varieties. Over 250 gardeners rated the varieties for plant health, earliness, yield, and food/ornamental quality. 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. All data and comments of gardeners are available in the complete report at www.dakotagardener.com/trials/. The following is a summary of data, including our conclusions for each trial.



1. Bean, Green

Both varieties received high ratings and were recommended by the vast majority of gardeners. Gardeners appreciated the vigor and yields of 'Bush Blue Lake 274'. They loved the straight, smooth and tender pods of 'Jade II'.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>B. Blue Lake 274</i>	48	76	7.65
<i>Jade II</i>	52	76	7.60

(21 sites)



2. Bean, Green Filet

'Maxibel' germinated especially well for a filet bean (small seeds) in cool soil. Yields were good; its pods were long, thin, beautiful and delicious. 'Masai' was less vigorous. Its pods were shorter but outstanding in quality.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
<i>Masai</i>	13	50	5.55
<i>Maxibel</i>	88	90	8.82

(12 sites)



3. Bean, Purple

'Royal Burgundy' germinated well and grew more vigorously. It produced good yields. 'Velour' pods were slim, uniform and straight. Many gardeners preferred its filet pod; others preferred the traditional pod of 'Royal Burgundy'.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
<i>Royal Burgundy</i>	50	78	7.17
<i>Velour</i>	50	61	6.56

(18 sites)



4. Bean, Vegetable Soybean

'Envy' germinated much better than 'Midori Giant' in the cool soil. It was more reliable; every gardener recommended it. The bigger-seeded 'Midori Giant' matched 'Envy' for yield and quality traits. It received strong reviews as well.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
<i>Envy</i>	75	100	8.50
<i>Midori Giant</i>	25	75	7.50

(7 sites)



5. Bean, Yardlong

'Gita' and 'Orient Wonder' thrived in 2012 but suffered in a cooler 2013. 'Orient Wonder' showed greater tolerance to cool temps. Earliness, yield and pod quality were similar. Most gardeners did not enjoy the asparagus-like flavor.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
<i>Gita</i>	37	51	5.20
<i>Orient Wonder</i>	63	34	5.84

(10 sites in 2012 and 11 sites in 2013)



6. Beet

Both varieties performed well and rated similarly for most traits. When gardeners detected a difference, they usually preferred 'Merlin'. Its roots were uniform, round, bright red, and sweet. Its leaves were healthy and good for greens.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating
<i>Detroit Dark Red</i>	36	81	7.67
<i>Merlin</i>	64	88	8.27

(16 sites)



7. Broccoli

'Packman' performed especially well. Gardeners liked the appearance and flavor of its heads. Yields were early and abundant. Every gardener preferred it over 'Coronado Crown', which did fine but was not special.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Coronado Crown</i>	0	50	6.75
<i>Packman</i>	100	100	8.25
			(6 sites)



8. Carrot, Orange Chantenay

'Hercules' yields were abundant and reliable. Nearly every gardener recommended it. 'New Kuroda' matched, or exceeded it for looks and taste quality. It is a promising variety especially for those who enjoy eating big, raw carrots.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Hercules</i>	58	92	7.75
<i>New Kuroda</i>	42	69	7.33
			(13 sites)



9. Carrot, Orange Nantes

Both grew well. 'Laguna' matched or exceeded 'Nectar' for all traits. It was sweeter, making it a great carrot for snacks. Its plants were healthy, roots were uniform, and yields were excellent. 'Nectar' carrots were longer; yet easier to dig.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Laguna</i>	65	75	7.89
<i>Nectar</i>	35	75	7.50
			(40 sites)



10. Carrot, Purple

Gardeners were impressed with the dark color of 'Deep Purple', but it had a tendency to develop forked roots. It grew vigorously, matured earlier, and produced higher yields. 'Purple Sun' lacked vigor, but had straighter roots.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Deep Purple</i>	55	83	6.58
<i>Purple Sun</i>	45	75	5.58
			(12 sites)



11. Carrot, Yellow

Both 'Chablis Yellow' and 'Yellow Sun' grew well and tasted good (but not great). Every gardener recommended 'Chablis Yellow'. Its lush plants produced good yields. Its bright yellow roots were longer and more uniform.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Chablis Yellow</i>	63	100	7.75
<i>Yellow Sun</i>	38	50	6.63
			(8 sites)



12. Corn, Ornamental

'Fiesta' grew vigorously and matured early. Its ears were full-sized; the kernels were bright and colorful. The purple coloring on some husks accentuated its beauty. The stalks of 'Wilda's Pride' grew tall, but ears did not always mature.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Fiesta</i>	75	75	8.50
<i>Wilda's Pride</i>	25	25	5.50
			(4 sites)



13. Corn, Popcorn

'Robust 997' grew vigorously. Its stalks were healthy and its yields were impressive. The red kernels of 'Red Beauty' were stunning. Both varieties matured before frost. We won't know until later which variety pops and tastes better.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Red Beauty</i>	0	67	5.00
<i>Robust 997</i>	100	67	6.00
			(3 sites)



14. Corn, Bicolor Sugary Enhanced

'Luscious' showed more vigor and produced higher yields. However, both varieties struggled to get established in the cool, wet soil. Most gardeners would not recommend either variety for that reason. Poor germination is not acceptable.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Ambrosia</i>	50	29	3.17
<i>Luscious</i>	50	43	5.00
			(8 sites)



15. Corn, Bicolor Super Sweet

Shrunken kernel types are known to struggle in cold, wet soils, but these varieties did well, especially 'Mirai 350 BC'. Both varieties grew well and produced good yields. Gardeners loved the taste of 'Xtra-Tender 277A'.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Mirai 350 BC</i>	38	60	6.90
<i>Xtra-Tender 277A</i>	63	89	7.88
(10 sites)			



16. Corn, Yellow Super Sweet

Data and comments are limited, but 'Vision' performed well at all sites. Germination of these shrunken kernel varieties was less than ideal in the cold soil. Gardeners liked both varieties, but 'Vision' was preferred for its superior taste.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>4001Y</i>	25	75	7.25
<i>Vision</i>	75	75	8.75
(4 sites)			



17. Corn, Bicolor Synergistic

The vigor of 'Allure' was impressive. It germinated well and developed strong stalks. Yields were good. Gardeners preferred the look and taste of its ears. 'Montauk' struggled; yields were poor and its ears were susceptible to smut.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Allure</i>	86	71	7.86
<i>Montauk</i>	14	14	4.00
(9 sites)			



18. Corn, Yellow Synergistic

'Honey Select' was superior. It grew more vigorously and produced higher yields. It matured earlier, and its ears were bigger and more attractive. The taste of 'Applause' was comparable; many gardeners recommended the variety.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Applause</i>	20	60	7.00
<i>Honey Select</i>	80	100	8.20
(5 sites)			



19. Cucumber, Pickling

'Homemade Pickles' matched or exceeded 'Calypso' in earliness, yield and taste. Its vines got off to a stronger start. Its fruits were uniform, straight and solid. 'Calypso' was good, but 'Homemade Pickles' was better.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Calypso</i>	34	59	6.54
<i>Homemade P.</i>	66	73	7.57
(24 sites)			



20. Cucumber, Slicing

'Straight Eight' is productive in cool summers and it outyielded the hybrid 'General Lee'. Its seedlings got off to a strong start. Gardeners liked the quality of 'General Lee' cucumbers; this variety yielded better in previous years.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>General Lee</i>	44	50	6.88
<i>Straight Eight</i>	56	86	7.43
(10 sites)			



21. Cucumber, Beit Alpha

'Diva' is not known for its vigor, but it germinated well in the cool soil and produced good crops. Fruits were thin-skinned, uniform in shape, crisp, mild, and burpless. Its competitor was disqualified due to an error by our seed source.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Diva</i>		82	8.09
(11 sites)			



22. Cucumber, Burpless

The vigorous vines of 'Tasty Green' produced earlier and higher yields. Its fruits were more attractive. Gardeners liked the smooth, dark skin and straight shape of 'Summer Dance' cucumbers, but overall the variety was less reliable.

Variety	Rec	Rating	
<i>Summer Dance</i>	38	48	6.38
<i>Tasty Green</i>	62	62	7.09
(23 sites)			



23. Gourd, Ornamental

Vigorous vines produced loads of gourds with rich colors and eye-catching shapes. 'Autumn Wings' matured earlier. Gardeners were enthralled with the diversity of "ugly" gourds produced by 'Gremlins'. Both varieties were outstanding.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Autumn Wings</i>	50	78	7.25
<i>Gremlins</i>	50	78	7.50
			(8 sites)



24. Greens, Pak Choi

Gardeners were pleased by both varieties. 'Prize Choy' showed superior seedling vigor, but the overall edge goes to the hybrid 'Joi Choi' for its higher yields and more attractive plants. Both were highly susceptible to flea beetle damage.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Joi Choi</i>	50	67	7.00
<i>Prize Choy</i>	50	67	6.50
			(8 sites)



25. Greens, Tatsoi

This trial was a disappointment due to poor germination. Heavy rains washed out some seedbeds. 'Tatsoi' showed superior germination and higher yields; while 'Savoy Tatsoi' was more flavorful. Flea beetles were a problem.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Tatsoi</i>	63	40	4.10
<i>Tatsoi Savoy</i>	38	20	3.33
			(11 sites)



26. Kohlrabi, White

Gardeners liked 'Winner' for its early maturity and superior quality. Its bulbs were more attractive and less subject to splitting; its flavor was mild and fruity. 'Kossak' had higher yields. Its larger bulbs did not get woody and were delicious.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Kossak</i>	43	75	7.14
<i>Winner</i>	57	88	8.29
			(9 sites)



27. Lettuce, Green Butterhead

Nearly everyone recommended both varieties. Gardeners were impressed with the productivity, taste, and heat tolerance of these lettuces. The varieties were comparable in all traits with a slight, but consistent edge going to 'Nancy'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Nancy</i>	71	88	8.13
<i>Sylvesta</i>	29	88	7.50
			(9 sites)



28. Lettuce, Red Butterhead

Both varieties performed well. Gardeners enjoyed their flavor and resistance to bolting. Most gardeners preferred 'Red Cross' for its impressive seedling vigor, superior resistance to bolting, and brighter red leaves.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Merveille d. Q.S.</i>	25	75	7.50
<i>Red Cross</i>	75	75	8.25
			(5 sites)



29. Lettuce, Green Crisphead

'Reine des Glaces' was good, but 'Nevada' was better. 'Nevada' rated higher for all traits. Its productivity, taste, and heat tolerance were impressive. The heads were bright green and heavy. Every gardener recommended 'Nevada'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Nevada</i>	100	100	8.50
<i>Reine d. Glaces</i>	0	60	7.25
			(5 sites)



30. Lettuce, Red Crisphead

Both varieties performed well, but most gardeners preferred 'Sierra'. Its plants were healthier, more vigorous, and more productive. Every gardener recommended it. The leaves of 'Pablo' were more colorful and especially beautiful.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Pablo</i>	33	67	8.67
<i>Sierra</i>	67	100	9.00
			(3 sites)



31. Lettuce, Green Leaf

Gardeners liked both varieties and were evenly split on their preferences. ‘Italienischer’ and ‘Venetian’ produced an abundance of delicious, large leaves. Neither of the varieties displayed a significant advantage over the other.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Italienischer</i>	50	75	8.00
<i>Venetian</i>	50	88	8.00
			(8 sites)



32. Lettuce, Red Leaf

The vigor of ‘New Red Fire’ was excellent, and gardeners quickly harvested impressive yields of crisp lettuce. Every gardener liked it. However, half of gardeners preferred ‘Red Velvet’. Its plants were more intense in color, and delicious.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>New Red Fire</i>	50	100	7.57
<i>Red Velvet</i>	50	71	8.14
			(7 sites)



33. Lettuce, Red Oakleaf

‘Red Salad Bowl’ showed good germination and strong vigor. This led to fuller stands and higher yields. Its plants were more attractive and tasted better, too. Every gardener liked it. The seedlings of ‘Mascara’ struggled in the heavy rains.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Mascara</i>	17	33	5.50
<i>Red Salad Bowl</i>	83	100	7.93
			(7 sites)



34. Lettuce, Romaine

Both varieties produced good crops of flavorful lettuce. Gardeners were split on preferences. Some liked the taste and extended harvest season of ‘Green Forest’. Others liked the high yields, ruffled leaves, and full heads of ‘Crisp Mint’.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Crisp Mint</i>	46	71	7.85
<i>Green Forest</i>	54	64	8.00
			(14 sites)



35. Melon, Cantaloupe

‘Athena’ was a reliable producer of good tasting melons and outperformed ‘Sarah’s Choice’ in all traits including earliness, yield and fruit quality. Both varieties suffered low yields due to the cool, wet spring.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Athena</i>	82	83	7.82
<i>Sarah’s Choice</i>	18	58	6.18
			(13 sites)



36. Melon, Large Cantaloupe

The cool spring led to poor germination. Half of gardeners failed to harvest any fruits. ‘Superstar’ is the standard big cantaloupe, but ‘Solstice’ was earlier and matched it for flavor. Most gardeners preferred ‘Solstice’; data are limited.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Solstice</i>	67	50	6.00
<i>Superstar</i>	33	50	6.25
			(6 sites)



37. Melon, Galia

‘Arava’ vines were vigorous and produced higher yields at most sites. Its melons were attractive. ‘Passport’ is known for earliness, but ‘Arava’ was just as early, if not earlier at most sites. The cold, wet spring reduced yields.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Arava</i>	60	60	6.89
<i>Passport</i>	40	40	6.00
			(10 sites)



38. Melon, Korean

‘Sun Jewel’ was rated superior for all traits: healthier vines, earlier maturity, more attractive melons, and better tasting. ‘Ginkaku’ was a disappointment. Half of our gardeners struggled to get ripe melons due to the cool, wet spring.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Ginkaku</i>	11	13	3.42
<i>Sun Jewel</i>	89	56	6.75
			(10 sites)



39. Okra, Red

Most gardeners preferred 'Carmine Splendor'. They enjoyed the beauty of its blossoms and the quality of its pods. The plants of 'Red Burgundy' were healthier, more vigorous, and produced an earlier crop. Overall yields were comparable.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Carmine Splendor</i>	60	61	6.78
<i>Red Burgundy</i>	40	53	6.20
(9 sites in 2012 and 6 sites in 2013)			



40. Pea, Freezing Shell

Both varieties were endorsed by the majority of gardeners. Most preferred 'Little Marvel'. Its small pods were packed with sweet, flavorful peas. 'Early Frosty' showed strong seedling vigor, matured early, and produced high yields.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Early Frosty</i>	42	77	7.00
<i>Little Marvel</i>	58	77	7.14
(14 sites)			



41. Pea, Fresh Shell

Gardeners were impressed with the robust plants and high yields of 'Knight'. Its pods were uniform, straight and full of flavorful peas. 'Maestro Improved' produced good early crops. Its pods were long and its peas were delicious.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Knight</i>	59	75	7.41
<i>Maestro Impr.</i>	41	75	7.55
(26 sites)			



42. Pea, Snap

Both varieties grew well. 'Sugar Ann' showed superior seedling vigor and produced good crops several days before 'Cascadia'. Most gardeners preferred the taste of 'Sugar Ann'. Yields of the two varieties were comparable.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Cascadia</i>	31	79	7.38
<i>Sugar Ann</i>	69	86	8.85
(15 sites)			



43. Pea, Snow

'Oregon Sugar Pod 2' has always done well in our trials. Its robust vines produced impressive yields of pods that looked attractive and tasted delicious. 'Avalanche' was acceptable, but did not generate much excitement.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Avalanche</i>	31	56	6.88
<i>Oregon S.P. 2</i>	69	75	7.88
(18 sites)			



44. Pepper, Green Bell

Most gardeners were satisfied with both varieties. Gardeners liked the size and shape of 'Bell Boy' fruits. Most of its fruits had 4 lobes and were good for stuffing. 'New Ace' produced decent yields, but most fruits had only 3 lobes.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Bell Boy</i>	50	71	5.86
<i>New Ace</i>	50	57	5.71
(10 sites)			



45. Pepper, Gold Bell

Few gardeners participated in this trial, but both 'Flavorburst' and 'Golden Summer' produced good crops. Their peppers were brightly colored, and our gardeners enjoyed their flavor. 'Flavorburst' showed outstanding seedling vigor.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Flavorburst</i>	50	100	6.00
<i>Golden Summer</i>	50	100	6.50
(3 sites)			



46. Pepper, Orange Bell

'Orange Blaze' germinated better, showed more vigor, produced earlier, and its yields were vastly superior. Although its peppers were smaller, they were brilliant orange. 'Gourmet' showed low germination, low vigor, and low yields.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Gourmet</i>	0	0	3.67
<i>Orange Blaze</i>	100	100	7.60
(5 sites)			



47. Pepper, Italian

Both varieties produced an abundance of peppers at most sites. Our small team of gardeners split on their preferences. Some liked the large green fruits of “Giant Marconi”; others preferred the yield and glossy red fruits of ‘Jimmy Nardello’s’.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Giant Marconi</i>	50	75	6.50
<i>Jimmy Nardello’s</i>	50	50	6.75
			(4 sites)



48. Pepper, Italian Bullhorn

Plants were healthy and bore excellent crops. ‘Carmen’ produced an earlier crop, but most gardeners preferred ‘Marcato’. Its plants were more vigorous and productive. Gardeners enjoyed its thick walled, glossy red fruits.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Carmen</i>	25	75	6.75
<i>Marcato</i>	75	75	7.75
			(4 sites)



49. Pepper, Sweet Specialty

Both ‘Flamingo’ and ‘Gypsy’ performed well at most sites. They produced loads of pale green, elongated fruits. ‘Flamingo’ plants were larger and more vigorous. Its fruits were more uniform in shape and sweeter in taste.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Flamingo</i>	67	67	8.00
<i>Gypsy</i>	33	67	7.67
			(4 sites)



50. Pepper, Ancho

‘Tiburon’ showed excellent germination and healthy growth. It produced the first fruits and was more productive than ‘Ancho Grande’. ‘Ancho Grande’ did not make much of an impression, good or bad, on our small team of gardeners.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Ancho Grande</i>	0	0	5.00
<i>Tiburon</i>	100	100	9.00
			(3 sites)



51. Pepper, Cayenne

‘Cheyenne’ plants were tall and sturdy; its yields were very good. Our small team of gardeners was especially impressed with the size of the peppers. ‘Cayenne Long Red Thin’ did well, but did not excel in any trait.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Cayenne L.R.T.</i>	0	33	7.33
<i>Cheyenne</i>	100	100	8.33
			(3 sites)



52. Pepper, Jalapeno

Both varieties produced an abundance of jalapenos in our short growing season. ‘Mucho Nacho’ plants were healthier and produced higher yields. Its fruits were deep green, larger, and resisted cracking better.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Early Jalapeno</i>	20	60	6.60
<i>Mucho Nacho</i>	80	80	7.00
			(5 sites)



53. Pepper, Santa Fe

Our small team of gardeners was impressed with the productivity of both varieties. The plants were full of colorful fruits. ‘Mariachi’ showed strong seedling vigor and developed into healthy, compact plants.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Mariachi</i>	67	100	7.67
<i>Santa Fe Grande</i>	33	67	7.33
			(3 sites)



54. Pumpkin, Miniature

Gardeners loved both varieties. Their vines produced an abundance of fruits. ‘Munchkin’ pumpkins were bright orange, ribbed, and had a flattened shape. ‘Wee-B-Little’ pumpkins were deep orange with a unique, globular shape.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Munchkin</i>	50	83	8.17
<i>Wee-B-Little</i>	50	83	8.00
			(6 sites)



55. Pumpkin, Small

Gardeners marveled at the precocious orange color and early maturity of 'Neon'. Its pumpkins were bright orange, round and uniform. 'Field Trip' pumpkins were deeper orange and its vines showed greater tolerance to powdery mildew.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Field Trip</i>	25	57	7.86
<i>Neon</i>	75	88	8.75
(8 sites)			



56. Pumpkin, Midsize

'Gladiator' excelled in all traits. Its vines were healthier and produced more. Gardeners liked the uniformity and deep orange color of the fruits. The new variety 'Orange Rave' lacked vigor and was nothing to rave about.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Gladiator</i>	78	89	8.00
<i>Orange Rave</i>	22	33	5.88
(9 sites)			



57. Pumpkin, Large

Both varieties produced a lot of big, nice pumpkins. 'Howden Biggie' produced slightly larger pumpkins while 'Big Doris' matured earlier. Gardeners enjoyed growing large pumpkins, but modest ratings reflect satisfaction and not excitement.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Big Doris</i>	50	55	6.70
<i>Howden Biggie</i>	50	64	7.20
(11 sites)			



58. Rutabaga

Most gardeners were introduced to rutabaga and many did not like it. Both varieties suffered damage from maggots, flea beetles and other pests. 'American Purple Top' was preferred for its healthier plants and milder flavor of its roots.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>American P.T.</i>	56	63	6.33
<i>Laurentian</i>	44	44	5.68
(10 sites in 2012 and 2 sites in 2013)			



59. Spinach, Savoy Leaf

Neither of the varieties was clearly better. In 2012, most gardeners preferred 'Donkey' for its darker green leaves and full flavor. In 2013, the germination of 'Donkey' dropped off, and 'Tyee' was preferred for its productivity and mild flavor.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Donkey</i>	51	73	7.22
<i>Tyee</i>	49	69	7.02
(33 sites in 2012 and 13 sites in 2013)			



60. Spinach, Smooth Leaf

Both varieties grew well and showed good resistance to bolting. 'Olympia' was more productive and its yields were more consistent from site to site. 'Pigeon' was praised by some gardeners for its thick, more flavorful leaves.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Olympia</i>	50	71	7.59
<i>Pigeon</i>	50	65	6.47
(19 sites)			



61. Squash, Green Zucchini

Both varieties grew well. 'Spineless Beauty' was preferred for its early maturity, good yields of attractive fruits, and healthy, spineless vines. Every gardener liked it. 'Zucchini Elite' is a fine variety, but does not excel for any trait.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Spineless Beauty</i>	80	100	7.67
<i>Zucchini Elite</i>	20	83	6.83
(8 sites)			



62. Squash, Green Stripe Zucchini

'Green Tiger' germinated better, grew faster and stronger, produced earlier, produced higher yields, and had straighter fruits. 'Safari' could match it for taste, but nothing else. Gardeners showed a lot of enthusiasm for this trial.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Green Tiger</i>	80	80	8.40
<i>Safari</i>	20	60	6.80
(5 sites)			



63. Squash, Yellow Zucchini

New variety 'Easypick Gold' outshined the standard 'Gold Rush'. Our small team liked the glossy, deep yellow color and tenderness of the fruits. Its vines produced more fruits and its open, nearly spineless habit made it easy to pick.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Easypick Gold</i>	100	100	7.33
<i>Gold Rush</i>	0	33	5.33
			(3 sites)



64. Swiss Chard, Pink

Both varieties performed well. 'Peppermint' got off to a strong start and was very healthy. Many gardeners preferred its multicolored stalks and crinkly leaves; others liked the smoother leaves and productivity of 'Magenta Sunset'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Magenta Sunset</i>	50	71	7.43
<i>Peppermint</i>	50	86	7.71
			(8 sites)



65. Tomato, Bush

Gardeners gave high ratings to both varieties. Most preferred 'Bush Early Girl II'. It was earlier at most sites and a heavy producer. Every gardener liked it. 'Better Bush' had sturdier vines that produced larger, more attractive tomatoes.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Better Bush</i>	40	60	7.60
<i>Bush Early Girl II</i>	60	100	8.40
			(5 sites)



66. Tomato, Early

'Stupice' vines got off to a strong start and produced good crops of tomatoes early in the season. Its fruits were juicy and tasted better than those of 'Siberian'. The fruits of 'Siberian' ripened later but were larger and more attractive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Siberian</i>	20	50	4.75
<i>Stupice</i>	80	75	7.50
			(6 sites)



67. Tomato, Main Season

Our small team of gardeners liked both varieties. Most gardeners preferred 'Mountain Fresh Plus', primarily for the looks of its big, bright red tomatoes. Gardeners noted the early maturity and good yields of 'Celebrity'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Celebrity</i>	33	67	7.33
<i>Mtn. Fresh Plus</i>	67	67	8.00
			(5 sites)



68. Tomato, Black

Our small team was disappointed with both varieties. Seedlings lacked vigor, yields were poor, and the flavor was fair at best. None of researchers could recommend either of these varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Black Prince</i>	50	0	3.50
<i>Indigo Rose</i>	50	0	4.00
			(3 sites)



69. Tomato, Canning

A cool spring, transplant shock, and hailstorms damaged several sites. Few, if any conclusions can be drawn, but 'Roma VF' was the preferred choice among our small team of gardeners. They liked its yield and the quality of its fruits.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Roma VF</i>	100	100	8.00
<i>Viva Italia</i>	0	50	7.00
			(5 sites)



70. Watermelon, Red

Both varieties produced good quality, ripe melons. Most gardeners preferred 'Sweet Dakota Rose'. Its vines were healthier and produced higher yields. It matched, if not exceeded 'Sweet Favorite' for earliness, looks and flavor.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sweet Dakota R.</i>	70	70	7.90
<i>Sweet Favorite</i>	30	70	7.60
			(15 sites)



71. Watermelon, Red Icebox

Both 'Blacktail Mountain' and 'Sugar Baby' struggled to get established in the cool, wet spring. 'Sugar Baby' was more reliable and produced a few melons. Most gardeners did not recommend either variety.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Blacktail Mtn.</i>	0	0	2.00
<i>Sugar Baby</i>	100	33	5.00
			(5 sites)



72. Watermelon, Yellow Icebox

'Early Moonbeam' vines were more vigorous and produced ripe watermelons earlier than 'Yellow Doll'. It produced more melons, too. 'Yellow Doll' struggled in the cool, wet spring. Its melons were fewer in number but sweeter in taste.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Early Moonbeam</i>	100	75	7.80
<i>Yellow Doll</i>	0	20	5.40
			(6 sites)



73. Basil, Italian

'Genovese' was preferred 2 to 1 among members of our small team of gardeners. All gardeners recommended it. The performance of 'Genovese' matched if not exceeded that of 'Nufar' for all yield and quality traits.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Genovese</i>	67	100	7.33
<i>Nufar</i>	33	33	6.00
			(4 sites)



74. Basil, Lemon

Gardeners loved both varieties, which rated similarly for health, yield and flavor. Most gardeners preferred 'Sweet Dani'. It showed superior seedling vigor and rapid growth. The bright green leaves of 'Mrs. Burns' were very attractive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Mrs. Burns</i>	35	76	8.00
<i>Sweet Dani</i>	65	87	8.37
			(10 sites in 2012 and 5 sites in 2013)



75. Basil, Purple

'Amethyst Improved' was healthier and more beautiful than 'Purple Ruffles'. The color was more uniform and shiny. Gardeners preferred its true Genovese taste, too. Data for this trial are limited as heavy rains washed out a few sites.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Amethyst Impr.</i>	100	100	9.00
<i>Purple Ruffles</i>	0	50	6.00
			(5 sites)



76. Cilantro

'Caribe' plants were healthier, more robust, and full of attractive, flavorful leaves. 'Confetti' is nothing more than a novelty. It lacks vigor and flavor. Even as a novelty it flops since its unique quality—its frilly leaf shape—was not liked.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Caribe</i>	90	90	8.10
<i>Confetti</i>	10	50	5.30
			(10 sites)



77. Parsley

Most gardeners preferred 'Giant of Italy' for its larger leaves, early season vigor, and overall health. Some gardeners noted the mild, sweet flavor of 'Titan'. Parsley seeds were slow to germinate and stands suffered due to the cool, wet spring.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Giant of Italy</i>	67	63	6.88
<i>Titan</i>	33	38	6.75
			(10 sites)



78. Cosmos

'Double Click Mix' received very high ratings. Gardeners were impressed with the size, abundance, and long life of its blooms. 'Versailles Mix' plants were healthy, but could not match the showiness of 'Double Click Mix' in the garden.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Double Click Mix</i>	83	100	9.00
<i>Versailles Mix</i>	17	71	6.67
			(7 sites)



79. Cosmos, Sulphur

Gardeners loved both varieties. ‘Bright Lights’ bloomed earlier at most sites; its shrubby plants were adorned with gold and orange flowers. ‘Diablo’ had a more compact habit and was covered with eye-catching scarlet-orange blooms.

Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
<i>Bright Lights</i>	50	83	7.92
<i>Diablo</i>	50	83	8.00
(12 sites)			



80. Sunflower, Dwarf

‘Firecracker’ was more vigorous, bloomed earlier, and produced more flowers. It was more attractive. Most gardeners liked the subtle yellow shades of ‘Music Box’, but preferred the bold red and gold bursts of ‘Firecracker’.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Firecracker</i>	80	100	8.50
<i>Music Box</i>	20	70	6.90
(13 sites)			



81. Sunflower, Gold Cutting

These single-stem varieties were developed for cut flower production, and gardeners liked both. Overall, the edge went to ‘ProCut Gold’ for its remarkable earliness, plant vigor, and uniformity of flower.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>ProCut Gold</i>	67	100	7.75
<i>Sunrich Gold</i>	33	75	6.50
(4 sites)			



82. Sunflower, Orange

‘Soraya’ was healthier, bloomed earlier, and was more free flowering. It received high ratings and unanimous approval from our small team of gardeners. The blooms of the shorter-stalked ‘Sonja’ could not match the radiance of ‘Soraya’.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sonja</i>	0	33	4.33
<i>Soraya</i>	100	100	8.67
(3 sites)			



83. Sunflower, Double Petal

‘Greenburst’ showed strong seedling vigor, sturdy multi-stemmed stalks, and healthy plants. It bloomed earlier and prolifically. ‘Double Quick Orange’ had an attractive bloom and its single-stem habit made it suited for cut flowers.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Double Quick O.</i>	25	63	5.63
<i>Greenburst</i>	75	88	8.00
(9 sites)			



84. Wheat, Ornamental

Gardeners were charmed by the understated beauty of wheat. Many were fascinated by the unique blue heads and black beards of ‘Utrecht Blue’. ‘Black Tip’, with its white heads and black beards, grew easily and bloomed earlier.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Black Tip</i>	44	60	5.50
<i>Utrecht Blue</i>	56	78	7.00
(9 sites)			



85. Zinnia, Coral

Gardeners liked both varieties. The petal colors of ‘Benary’s Giant Coral’ were true and bright; its flowers were big and plentiful; and its flower stems were sturdy. ‘Senora’ matched it in many ways, but its blooms were less brilliant.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Benary’s G. Coral</i>	60	86	8.21
<i>Senora</i>	40	79	7.36
(9 sites)			



86. Zinnia, Cutting

‘Oklahoma Mix’ and ‘Sunbow Mix’ produced an abundance of bright, colorful flowers for bouquets. ‘Oklahoma Mix’ matched or exceeded ‘Sunbow Mix’ in all traits, including plant health, earliness, abundance of blooms, and beauty.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Oklahoma Mix</i>	78	100	8.42
<i>Sunbow Mix</i>	22	74	7.21
(20 sites)			

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