

Industry experts pick top 1991 plants



*Linn
Mills*

Here's what's new in flowers and vegetables for '91. These are All-American Selections (AAS) winners. They are the All-Americans in the plant industry for this season, as judged by plant industry experts across America, who subject them to an objective testing program.

Each year seed companies introduce hundreds of new flowers and vegetables to the public, and enter what they regard as their best varieties in the AAS competition. This year seven flowers and three vegetables made it into the all-star circle.

Each winner is unique, but all share three important traits: They are proven performers; all clearly exhibited improvements over the closest varieties on the market; and all have won the AAS Award.

Ask your nurseryman to order these AAS Winners, or send for seeds. For a list of seed companies, phone my office 731-3130 and I'll send you a list. Here is a short description of each of this year's winners:

durable annual proved itself all across America and even into Canada. And it will take Vegas weather conditions in stride. It brings a new color — a deep velvety rose purple — to the landscape, and blends well with other annuals in the color scheme. It doesn't need deadheading, staking or pruning. In fact, it's almost carefree. It also is drought tolerant.

An adaptable plant, *Pretty In Rose* does just as well in an urn, hanging basket, or patio planter, but the plant must have full sun.

Vinca Parasol — One of the judges commented that *Parasol* evokes images of ladies in pastel

short, strong stems show off the delicate pansy faces.

Provide partial shade for best results and use them in your container garden. Or interplant them among your spring flowering bulbs for color when bulb flowers fade.

Pansy Padparadja — A distinctively orange pansy, *Padparadja* (pa-pa-ra'ja) exhibits improved color quality and an eagerness to bloom. In the AAS trials, *padparadja* blooms maintained a true orange and did not fade despite the heat. (Other orange pansies faded to an apricot color.)

Space the dwarf plants about 6 to 8 inches apart to create a full bed of color. *Padparadja*, like all pansies, will perform best under cool weather conditions. To extend the blooming period, provide some afternoon sun protection going into the warmer months. *Padparadja* doesn't require much maintenance once established.

Gaillardia Red Plume — An improved dwarf AAS Winner that exhibited a super long blooming season in the trials. When grown in

shade. It's a bit tricky to start from seed. However, if you follow instructions that come with the packet, you'll be OK. Better still get some starts from the nursery.

Kentucky Blue Bean — AAS Judges grew *Kentucky Blue* next to *Kentucky Wonder* and *Blue Lake* and found it matured earlier and yielded more. Taste tests also won their hearts. It also demonstrated resistance to bean rust and common bean mosaic virus. For best performance, *Kentucky Blue* needs a rich soil, partial shade, vertical support and uniform watering to produce an bountiful crop. Plan to start harvesting beans about 60 days after sowing. For optimum flavor and tenderness, harvest pods when they are 6 to 7 inches long. Harvest diligently for maximum flavor and yield. If you allow the pods to become fully mature, expect a light string to develop.

Golden Crown Watermelon — This is a melon lovers delight. It's an early yielder and with its tolerance to many melon diseases, ex-

The *Golden Crown* plant, however, is a space hog. Its vigorous vines may spread out six to eight feet in the garden. Wait until mid-April to plant this melon, as it needs extra warm soil to germinate. (We've plenty of that.) You only have to wait 60 days for this melon.

Tivoli Squash — This bush-type plant fits perfectly into smaller gardens or containers. The vines only take about two feet of space. (Other squash plants can reach out six to eight feet.) It takes about a 100 days for the fruit to reach the dinner table. It is blocky, oblong-shaped and creamy yellow at maturity. When the fruit is ready for harvest, take it immediately to the oven to bake or store the same as any other winter squash. Each vine will yield about three to five squash.

Expect to find these winners at your nursery or in the 1991 mail order catalogs this spring. They are all easy to start from seed, with the exception of *Freckles*. Or ask your nurseryman to get them as bedding