

# Ornamental and Vegetable Plant Trials at UW Madison & West Madison Research Station

<http://westmadison.ars.wisc.edu/>

Plant trials are a way of measuring how well a particular variety will perform in different parts of the country, as well as a way of evaluating new varieties before they go in to the retail market. The *West Madison Agricultural Research Station* is just one of a number of places around the state that conducts such trials for individual companies as well as the well-known national **All-America Selections**, an independent, non-profit organization that tests new varieties throughout the country and then introduces only the best garden performers as **AAS winners**.

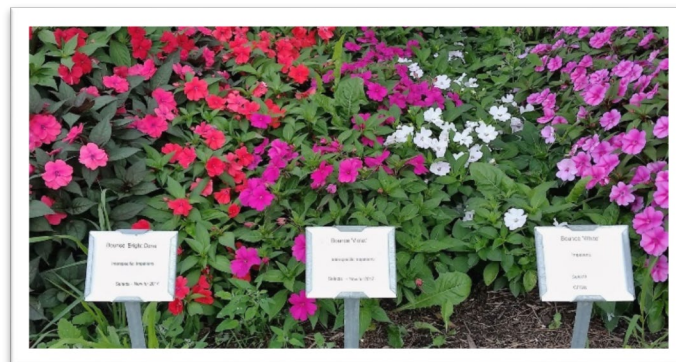


## How are Plant Trials Valuable for the Consumer?

By visiting a trial in your own area you will see how plants survive in a climate like your own. Plants listed in catalogs and on websites may not be suited for all areas of the country. Local garden centers tend to carry only plants for their geographical area, but it can be hard to tell how they will do in your garden when they are young and in a container. Seeing for yourself how they grow in your location provides valuable information for home gardeners.

## What Role do Plant Trials play within the Industry?

Seed companies that are in the business of developing new plant introductions spend many years growing and testing new plants in many different soil and environmental conditions before they introduce them to the market through local garden centers. The *West Madison Agricultural Research Station* has provided space for a number of years for the trialing of new varieties through a partnership with the **Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin (CFGW)** and seed breeders from around the country. These trials give garden center owners a chance to see what might soon be available for them to offer to you, the consumer.



## What Information is Evaluated at a Plant Trial?

Criteria for Flowers	Criteria for Vegetables
Uniform in size, blossom form, color intensity	Taste, Texture
Long bloom season	Total crop yield
Weather resistance	Compact plants
Disease/Insect resistance	Multiple Disease Resistance
Flower fragrance	Novelty or uniqueness
Novelty or uniqueness	

