The Botanic Garden at OSU serves as AAS display garden

The Canadian Garden Council has proclaimed 2022 as the Year of the Garden. In support of Canada’s celebration, it’s a great time to pay tribute to the All-America Selections (AAS) display garden at The Botanic Garden at Oklahoma State University.

AAS is a non-profit organization that trials new flower and vegetable varieties that aren’t yet available on the market. The selections that perform best in North America become AAS National Winners. Entries that perform well in certain regions of the country become AAS Regional Winners. AAS National and Regional Winners have been tested for garden performance by a panel of expert judges.

AAS selects various locations around the country to serve as trial gardens where seeds are planted to see how well they perform. An AAS Display Garden provides the public with an opportunity to view the newest AAS Winners. A typical display garden is a public botanic garden or arboretum, a municipality, a garden retailer, a university garden or other typical garden. There is a network of nearly 200 dedicated AAS gardens across the country.

AAS winners are flowers and vegetables that have been “tested nationally and proven locally.” All of the garden sites selected are divided into regions, with Oklahoma being in the Southwest Mountain Region, which includes Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Nevada and the southern part of California. The Botanic Garden at OSU received 52 varieties of seeds, including vegetables and ornamentals.

Although the names of these newest releases aren’t familiar to the gardening community, it’s a sure bet you’ve heard of some of the older AAS selections, such as those in the tomato family, including the 1984 Celebrity, the 1995 Big Beef or the 1999 Juliet.

When purchasing AAS winners, gardeners can be assured each plant has been put through its paces by an independent, neutral trialing organization and has been judged by experts in the field and proven to grow well in a designated region.

For more information about the All-America Selections plants, please visit all-americaselections.org.

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