

What's New in Flowering Annuals

by Dean Bemis

With over 150 new varieties in flowering annuals introduced each year ... it's almost impossible for a busy golf course superintendent to keep up with their evaluations! Vaughan's Seed Company of Downers Grove has more than 7 acres of flowering annual comparisons located 6½ miles west of DeKalb, Illinois on the campus of Kishwaukee College. Here we can visit our comparisons weekly and track their performance throughout the spring, summer and fall.

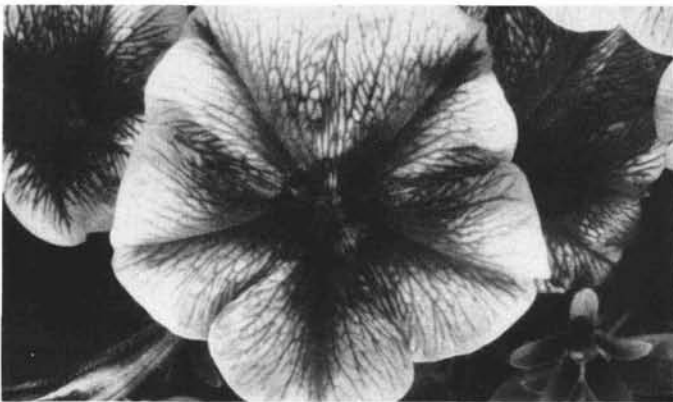
If you would like to visit these field trials and receive a guided tour, I would be happy to organize small groups to visit our trials. If you would like to arrange a date and time, please call 1-800-323-7253 and ask for Dean in the Sales Department.

If your schedule won't allow a firsthand visit to our field comparisons, the following are some new varieties to think about for the upcoming bedding plant season. It's not too early to develop a plan for the use of annuals in the golfscape ... if you need help, please call me!

BEGONIA AMBASSADOR SERIES is a green leaf fibrous type begonia bred for larger flowers and earlier flowering. This outstanding performer is more vigorous than the traditional Cocktail Series (bronze leaved) or Rio Series (green leaved). Available in Scarlet, Rose, Soft Pink, White, and a mix of colors. Should be used on 6" spacing ... morning sun and afternoon shade are ideal. With enough sun, all the leaves will eventually turn bronze except on the Ambassador White which will stay a deep lush green color!

MARIGOLD MARVEL SERIES is an early blooming African (tall) type marigold with beautifully tightly packed rows of petals. A very symmetrical and uniform flower head establishes on a 12-14" plant. Loves full sun and is available in Yellow Chiffon, Gold, Orange, and normal Yellow colors. Should be used on 6" spacing.

PETUNIA PRIMETIME RED VEINED is a new addition to the multiflora petunia series "Primetime". This is an outstanding garden performer! Primetime Red Veined has a beautiful rich red color with deeper red veins. Should be used on 4" spacing and will tolerate more abuse than normal grandiflora petunias.



Petunia Primetime Red Veined

SALVIA SIZZLER SERIES is a tremendous garden performer with a wide range of flower colors available. Bred for its early flowering and uniform compact habit ... the deep green foliage contrasts beautifully with the flower spike color. Can be used in shade (if placed there already in bloom), partial shade (morning sun and afternoon shade), or full sun. Expect some flower fading during mid summer heat if used in full sun. Should be used on 6" spacing.



Salvia Sizzler Red

VINCA BLUSH COOLER has a tremendous branching habit and the unique blush pink petal with a rose eye. The performance in the golfscape is exceptional! Loves all the full sun and heat that the midwest can dish out! Should be used on 4" spacing. Pay special attention to the overlapping petals.



Vinca Blush Cooler

This season has been a "lousy" season for the growth and flower production of annuals; 40° nights and cool days are not conducive for filling in flower beds! As July progresses and with the onset of warm, humid days and nights, watch your flowering annuals really go to town! If they haven't done much yet, don't get excited, they will come around!