

North Dakota Home Garden Variety Trials 2010 Results

Over 200 households across North Dakota and surrounding states evaluated 106 varieties of vegetables in their gardens in 2010. Varieties were rated for germination, plant health, earliness, yield, and taste.

In each of the trials, gardeners were asked which of the varieties they **preferred** and which of the varieties (none, one, or both) they would **recommend** to other gardeners. They **rated** the performance of each variety using a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 = poor and 10 = excellent.

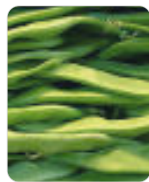
The following is a summary of the data, including our conclusions for each trial:



1. Dry Bean

Gardeners liked both varieties, but preferred 'Arikara Yellow'. A native variety of North Dakota, its plants were more upright, healthier, produced earlier, and were more productive. Gardeners enjoyed the flavor of both varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Arikara Yellow</i>	62	85	7.62
<i>Hutterite</i>	38	85	7.00
			(13 sites)



2. Green Flatpod Bean

Gardeners raved over the long, 7-inch pods of 'Greencrop', which were remarkably tender for a bean of that size. Every grower in the trial recommended it. Many gardeners did not like the taste of 'Roma II', a traditional Romano bean.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Greencrop</i>	88	100	8.75
<i>Roma II</i>	13	25	6.00
			(8 sites)



3. Green Gourmet Bean

'Jade' was preferred for its higher yields and earlier maturity. Its pods were longer, meatier, and a bright medium green. Gardeners praised 'Pike' for its dark green, straight, and extremely slender pods—perfect for gourmet cooking.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Jade</i>	60	72	7.16
<i>Pike</i>	40	64	7.04
			(26 sites)



4. Green Standard Bean

Gardeners liked both of these varieties, which are known for reliability. 'Provider' was preferred for its earliness, higher yields, and an extended harvest season. Pod quality of both varieties was very good.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Provider</i>	53	80	7.88
<i>Top Crop</i>	47	60	7.40
			(17 sites)



5. Purple Bean

Gardeners liked the beauty of both varieties. They preferred 'Royalty Purple Pod' for its higher yields and extended harvest season. The pods of both varieties were sometimes more stringy than desired.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Royalty P. Pod</i>	67	88	8.06
<i>Royal Burgundy</i>	33	67	7.49
			(24 sites)



6. Vegetable Soybean

'Envy' germinated much better. Its plants were healthy and produced a good crop of bright green beans. 'Fiskeby' was less reliable. Its pods were larger, ripened earlier, but yields were lower. Gardeners enjoyed the flavor of both varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Envy</i>	75	85	6.69
<i>Fiskeby</i>	25	38	4.85
(14 sites)			



7. Wax Bean

Both varieties grew well and produced good yields of quality beans. 'Carson' pods were lighter yellow in color, tender, and delicious. Its plants were fuller and healthier. 'Slenderwax' was very good but not exceptional.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Carson</i>	60	80	8.13
<i>Slenderwax</i>	40	63	7.38
(16 sites)			



8. Yardlong Bean

'Gita' vines were healthier and much more productive. Its pods were smooth and full of flavor. 'Red Stripe' was poor. In general, gardeners preferred the taste of "normal" green beans over these yardlong beans.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Gita</i>	75	75	5.88
<i>Red Stripe</i>	25	13	3.25
(10 sites)			



9. Beet

Both varieties produced good yields of attractive, sweet roots. Most gardeners preferred 'Detroit Dark Red' for its vigorous growth, lush tops, and dark red roots.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Detroit Dark Red</i>	65	83	7.35
<i>Red Ace</i>	35	70	7.17
(25 sites)			



10. Colorful Carrot

Gardeners loved 'Sugarsnax 54' for its bright orange color and outstanding flavor. Most gardeners liked 'Rainbow', although its lighter colored roots were less flavorful. Kids especially appreciated 'Rainbow' for its array of colors.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sugarsnax 54</i>	72	89	7.61
<i>Rainbow</i>	28	64	6.70
(39 sites)			



11. Orange Carrot

Both varieties grew well and produced lots of tasty carrots. Gardeners preferred 'Nelson' for its straighter, smoother, and very uniform roots. Many gardeners felt it tasted better, especially when eaten raw.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Nelson</i>	62	79	7.49
<i>Mokum</i>	38	70	6.79
(78 sites in 2009 and 41 sites in 2010)			



12. Purple Carrot

Gardeners liked 'Purple Haze' for its long, straight, dark purple roots. Gardeners were delighted with the brilliant red-purple skin of 'Cosmic Purple' but this coloration was shallow and its roots were subject to cracking and forking.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Purple Haze</i>	55	78	7.50
<i>Cosmic Purple</i>	45	84	7.32
(19 sites)			



13. White Carrot

These carrots were easy to clean and had a delicate flavor. 'Crème de Lite' produced higher yields and its roots were more slender and tapered.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Crème de Lite</i>	67	67	7.67
<i>White Satin</i>	33	50	6.67
(6 sites)			



14. Yellow Carrot

'Yellow Sun' was praised for its golden yellow roots and sweet taste. Every gardener liked it. 'Yellowstone' roots were more slender but were lighter colored and sometimes had a greenish tint.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Yellow Sun</i>	80	100	8.67
<i>Yellowstone</i>	20	40	5.80
(6 sites)			



15. Pickling Cucumber

'Alibi' was 10 days earlier. Gardeners liked the shape, firmness, and deep green color of its cukes. 'H-19 Little Leaf' was slower to get started but then impressed gardeners with its late season yields. Its cukes were uniform in size.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Alibi</i>	59	71	7.21
<i>H-19 Little Leaf</i>	41	55	5.88
(35 sites)			



16. Slicing Asian Cucumber

The productivity of 'Orient Express II' was amazing. Its cucumbers were very slender, attractive, delicious, and burpless. Every gardener recommended it. 'Suyo Long' could not compete with it.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Orient Exp. II</i>	100	90	8.22
<i>Suyo Long</i>	0	30	5.56
(10 sites)			



17. Slicing Beit Alpha Cucumber

Gardeners enjoyed the quality of these cukes, especially the taste of 'Diva'. Several gardeners reported the vines of 'Sultan' were more vigorous, setting fruits earlier in the season. Neither variety was vigorous or very productive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Diva</i>	50	58	5.86
<i>Sultan</i>	50	58	5.47
(19 sites)			



18. Slicing Burpless Cucumber

Neither variety excelled, but gardeners generally liked both. About half of the gardeners liked the yields and slimmer cucumbers of 'Sweeter Yet'. The other half preferred the straighter, more uniform cucumbers of 'Sweet Slice'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sweeter Yet</i>	54	66	7.33
<i>Sweet Slice</i>	46	66	6.84
(77 sites in 2009 and 26 sites in 2010)			



19. Slicing Classic Cucumber

'Marketmore 76' cukes were dark green, smooth, and slower to become overmature. It maintained its production late into the season. 'Longfellow' vines were vigorous. Neither variety could match the yields or fruit qualities of the best hybrids.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Marketmore 76</i>	69	69	7.08
<i>Longfellow</i>	31	54	6.33
(13 sites)			



20. Slicing Standard

Gardeners were most impressed with the health, vigor, and productivity of 'General Lee' throughout the summer. 'Raider' got off to a strong start and produced good yields in the early season. Both produced good quality cukes.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>General Lee</i>	58	78	7.45
<i>Raider</i>	42	61	7.02
(19 sites)			



21. Mizuna

Gardeners were pleased with the delicate flavor and fringed leaves of mizuna. Both varieties were easy to grow and found to be a nice addition to a mixed salad. 'Kyona Mizuna' was faster growing, more productive, and more attractive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Kyona Mizuna</i>	75	75	7.75
<i>Mizuna Purple</i>	25	25	5.33
(4 sites)			



22. Red Mustard

Both varieties performed well. The greens were beautiful and had a mild, pleasant, peppery taste. The greens of 'Osaka Purple' were more tender and less coarse. 'Red Giant' had larger leaves and was more vigorous.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Osaka Purple</i>	62	78	8.22
<i>Red Giant</i>	38	78	8.09
(6 sites in 2009 and 3 sites in 2010)			



23. Kohlrabi

Gardeners liked the uniformly round bulbs of 'Winner'. Yields were good and its bulbs resisted splitting. The smooth, fruity flavor of 'Winner' was enjoyable. 'Early White Vienna' matured very early and produced good quality bulbs.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Winner</i>	64	95	7.64
<i>E. W. Vienna</i>	36	74	6.76
(27 sites in 2009 and 16 sites in 2010)			



24. Lettuce, Green Leaf

'Salad Bowl' and 'Slobolt' were impressive in everything: health, growth rate, yields, resistance to bolting, and flavor. Most gardeners preferred 'Slobolt' for its larger leaves, higher yields, and longer harvest period.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Slobolt</i>	59	84	7.84
<i>Salad Bowl</i>	41	80	7.53
(23 sites in 2009 and 8 sites in 2010)			



25. Lettuce, Red Leaf

'New Red Fire' and 'Red Sails' were exceptional. Gardeners loved the appearance, yield, and taste of both varieties. 'New Red Fire' showed outstanding vigor and its leaves were brightly colored. 'Red Sails' was extremely productive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Red Sails</i>	51	92	8.20
<i>New Red Fire</i>	49	87	8.25
(26 sites in 2009 and 15 sites in 2010)			



26. Lettuce, Specialty

Gardeners liked both varieties. Both of these bolt-resistant varieties produced good yields of lettuce through much of the summer. Most gardeners preferred 'Buttercrunch'. It had a darker green, fuller leaf and its heads were very attractive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Buttercrunch</i>	54	80	8.03
<i>Nevada</i>	46	72	7.44
(34 sites in 2009 and 29 sites in 2010)			



27. Melon, Asian

'Sun Jewel' was more vigorous, healthier, and more productive. Its fruits were larger and of higher quality. Both varieties matured early. Their flavor was unusual—somewhat like a pear—some gardeners liked it and some did not.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sun Jewel</i>	100	80	6.17
<i>Early Silver Line</i>	0	20	4.00
(5 sites)			



28. Melon, Cantaloupe Classic

'Delicious 51' was superior although both varieties performed poorly. 'Delicious 51' was earlier, more productive, and its melons were more attractive. Yields of both varieties were poor. These heirlooms do not have the vigor of hybrids.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Delicious 51</i>	60	36	4.91
<i>Hearts of Gold</i>	40	27	3.91
(13 sites)			



29. Melon, Cantaloupe Classic Large

Neither variety was impressive. Yields were poor. 'Pride of Wisconsin' had healthier vines and was more likely to produce a ripe melon. Gardeners loved the flavor of these melons, but there were very few ripe melons to savor.

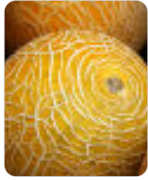
Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Iroquois</i>	50	42	5.67
<i>Pride of Wisc.</i>	50	42	5.58
(13 sites)			



30. Melon, Cantaloupe Hybrid

Yields of both varieties were low. 'Athena' melons were larger and more attractive; its flesh was sweet and firm. 'Goddess' was very sweet, but its rind was thin and the melons had a short shelf life. 'Goddess' was earlier, a very valuable trait.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Athena</i>	65	75	6.19
<i>Goddess</i>	35	50	5.13
(16 sites)			



31. Melon, Galia

'Passport' is a fine green-flesh melon variety for the north. Gardeners liked its early maturity, high yields, and attractive melons. Most gardeners were not satisfied with the earliness or yields of 'Arava'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Passport</i>	80	100	8.80
<i>Arava</i>	20	40	5.60
(5 sites)			



32. Pea, Shelling

Gardeners liked both varieties and were evenly split when choosing their favorite. 'Early Frosty' was earlier and well liked for its freezing qualities. 'Lincoln' was preferred by many for its longer pods. Yields of both were acceptable.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Lincoln</i>	50	78	7.38
<i>Early Frosty</i>	50	68	7.11
(38 sites)			



33. Pea, Snap

Gardeners were lukewarm and evenly split on which of the varieties they preferred. Many felt 'Cascadia' had healthier, more productive vines. The pods of 'Sugar Sprint' were not as attractive, but were definitely sweeter.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sugar Sprint</i>	50	64	6.43
<i>Cascadia</i>	50	55	6.38
(32 sites)			



34. Jack-O'-Lantern Pumpkin

The precocious habit of 'Neon' guarantees orange pumpkins for Halloween. Gardeners liked 'Neon' for its bright orange color, smooth rind, and uniformity. 'Racer' produced larger pumpkins with a darker orange rind and better taste.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Neon</i>	55	81	7.31
<i>Racer</i>	45	71	7.16
(32 sites)			



35. French Radish

Gardeners preferred 'French Breakfast' for its higher yields. Its scarlet and white roots were very attractive, uniform in shape, and mild tasting. Gardeners also enjoyed the look and taste of 'D'Avignon', which matured very quickly.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>French Breakfast</i>	70	70	6.71
<i>D'Avignon</i>	30	67	5.84
(17 sites in 2009 and 7 sites in 2010)			



36. Pink Radish

Gardeners liked the novel color and mild flavor of both varieties. They were impressed with the uniform size and globular shape of 'Pink Beauty' and loved the bright pink color of 'Pretty in Pink'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Pink Beauty</i>	57	86	7.88
<i>Pretty in Pink</i>	43	100	7.29
(8 sites)			



37. Red Radish

Gardeners liked both varieties, but most preferred 'Cherry Belle'. They liked its mild flavor and round, bright red roots. A few gardeners noted 'Champion' stood better in the field before getting hot and woody.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Cherry Belle</i>	67	89	8.11
<i>Champion</i>	33	56	7.22
(9 sites)			



38. White Radish

Both varieties performed well in Fall 2009 under ideal conditions. 'Ping Pong' also excelled under warmer than ideal temps in Spring 2010. This hybrid was more uniform in shape, tasted milder, and resisted splitting and bolting.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Ping Pong</i>	70	64	7.60
<i>Hailstone</i>	30	52	5.90
(6 sites in 2009 and 4 sites in 2010)			



39. Red-Stem Spinach

Most gardeners preferred 'Red Cardinal' for its higher yields, but neither variety was impressive. Bolting in early summer was a problem. Some gardeners were disappointed with the small size of the leaves.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Red Cardinal</i>	67	65	5.85
<i>Bordeaux</i>	33	22	4.53
(12 sites)			



40. Smooth-Leaf Spinach

Both varieties resisted bolting and produced impressive yields of delicious, easy-to-clean leaves. The majority of gardeners preferred 'Olympia' for its higher yields and more attractive leaves.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Olympia</i>	61	75	7.46
<i>Space</i>	39	75	7.17
(18 sites)			



41. Green Zucchini Summer Squash

Both varieties were outstanding. Their plants were healthy and extremely productive. Their fruits were attractive and delicious. Most gardeners preferred 'Spineless Beauty' for its spineless vines and open plant habit.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Spineless Beauty</i>	75	91	8.45
<i>Zucchini Elite</i>	25	82	8.00
(12 sites)			



42. Yellow Specialty Summer Squash

Gardeners liked both of these All-American varieties. Their vines were productive and their fruits were colorful. 'Papaya Pear' was especially productive, but gardeners preferred 'Sunburst' for the beauty and quality of its fruits.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sunburst</i>	88	100	8.44
<i>Papaya Pear</i>	13	75	7.11
(9 sites)			



43. Yellow Straightneck Summer Squash

Our gardeners were amazed at the productivity of these varieties. Differences were subtle, but most gardeners preferred 'Sunray' for its smooth and attractive fruits.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sunray</i>	83	88	7.50
<i>Multipik</i>	17	75	6.13
(8 sites)			



44. Acorn Winter Squash

Neither variety was especially productive. The slight edge went to 'Table King', which showed more vigor and produced larger fruits. Some gardeners preferred the cute, smaller fruits of 'Honey Bear'; its vines were especially compact.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Table King</i>	60	60	5.80
<i>Honey Bear</i>	40	50	5.67
(11 sites)			



45. Buttercup Winter Squash

Gardeners were satisfied with both varieties. The fruits of 'Burgess' matured earlier and were generally larger than those of 'Uncle David's Dakota Dessert'. Yields were similar and gardeners were divided on taste qualities.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Burgess</i>	56	76	7.41
<i>U.D.D. Dessert</i>	44	65	7.41
(34 sites)			



46. Butternut Winter Squash

The vines of 'Waltham' showed robust growth and produced a higher yield. The semi-bush habit of 'Early Butternut' was appreciated by gardeners with limited space. Gardeners enjoyed eating the fruits of both varieties.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Waltham</i>	51	76	7.66
<i>E. Butternut</i>	49	70	7.41
(15 sites in 2009 and 9 sites in 2010)			



47. Hubbard Winter Squash

Neither variety was exceptional, but gardeners liked both of them. Most gardeners preferred 'Red Kuri' for its impressive yields and rich flavor. They also enjoyed the beauty and sweetness of our North Dakota native squash 'Lakota'.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Red Kuri</i>	60	70	7.29
<i>Lakota</i>	40	70	6.71
(10 sites)			



48. Gold Swiss Chard

'Bright Yellow' was vigorous when young and is well suited for baby greens production. Its ribs are sunny yellow when young, turning gold as the plants mature. The bright orange ribs of 'Orange Fantasia' were also very attractive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Bright Yellow</i>	50	100	8.25
<i>Orange Fantasia</i>	50	75	8.00
(4 sites)			



49. Red Swiss Chard

Gardeners were not excited about either variety, but most preferred 'Rhubarb'. They liked its vigor and the vivid contrast between the deep green and rich red colors in its leaves. 'Magenta Sunset' had a relatively mild flavor.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Rhubarb</i>	55	50	5.85
<i>Magenta Sunset</i>	45	41	5.64
(11 sites in 2009 and 4 sites in 2010)			



50. White Swiss Chard

Neither of the varieties stood out as being exceptionally good or bad. The few growers who participated in the trial preferred 'Lucullus' primarily on the basis of its very crinkly, attractive leaves.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Lucullus</i>	100	67	7.00
<i>Fordhook Giant</i>	0	33	6.00
(3 sites)			



51. Gold Watermelon

'Gold Flower' was much earlier and productive. Its flesh was crisp and sweet, but the rind was thin and susceptible to cracking. 'Oraneglo' had a more traditional watermelon shape, but was slow to ripen, unreliable, and not very sweet.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Gold Flower</i>	75	47	5.41
<i>Oraneglo</i>	25	19	3.89
(14 sites)			



52. Red Watermelon

Yields of both varieties were poor. 'Sugar Baby' matured earlier and produced higher yields, but fruit quality was only acceptable. 'Sweet Dakota Rose' was not reliable, but the successful gardeners (usually in the south) loved its taste.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Sweet Dakota R.</i>	51	57	4.95
<i>Sugar Baby</i>	49	44	4.61
(42 sites)			



53. Yellow Watermelon

'Yellow Doll' was superior, but neither variety excelled. Both varieties got off to slow starts and yields were low. Most gardeners enjoyed the taste of 'Yellow Doll' and recommended the variety. 'Yellow Alice' performed poorly.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
<i>Yellow Doll</i>	64	79	5.75
<i>Yellow Alice</i>	36	29	4.67
(14 sites)			