NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE North Dakota **Home Garden Variety Trials** 2012 Summary of Results

Gardeners in North Dakota and surrounding states participated in a series of 58 trials, each trial comparing two promising vegetable or flower varieties. Approximately 250 households rated the varieties for plant health, earliness, yield, and food/ornamental quality. In each trial they noted which of the two varieties they preferred (Pref) and which of the varieties they would recommend (Rec) to other gardeners. They rated the performance of each variety using a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 = poor and 10 = excellent.

All data and comments of gardeners are available in the complete report at www.dakotagardener.com/trials/. The following is a summary of data, including our conclusions for each trial. Preferences and recommendations are listed as percentages of evaluators while ratings are listed as an average:

was not an efficient use of space for many gardeners.

2. Bean, Green (Concentrated Harvest)



1. Bean, Dry	Variety	(%)	(%)	(Avg.)
These North Dakota varieties grew well. The white-seeded	Arikara Yellow	50	88	7.50
'Great Northern' was more productive while the yellow seeds	Great Northern	50	63	6.63
of 'Arikara Yellow' were more attractive. Growing dry beans			(!	9 sites)

Pref Rec Rating

Pref Rec Rating



2. Bean, Green (Concentrated Harvest)	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
'Provider' was more vigorous, earlier to bear and more	Pike	50	60	7.50
productive. Gardeners enjoyed the flavor and looks of its	Provider	50	70	7.30
traditional pods. Half of gardeners raved over the thin, smooth pods of 'Pike' and enthusiastically preferred it.			(1	0 sites)

Variety



3. Bean, Green (Multiple Harvest) Variety Pref Rec Rating Gardeners enjoyed 'Bush Blue Lake 274', a popular producer B. B. Lake 274 51 68 7.61 of deep green, crisp pods. 'Strike' showed superior seedling Strike 49 7.47 63 vigor, earlier yields, and matched, if not exceeded 'Bush (39 sites) Blue Lake 274' for yield and taste qualities.



4. Bean, Purple

5 Rean Vellow Filet

	T Gill T G L J	 	
Most gardeners preferred 'Royal Burgundy'. Its plants were healthier and produced earlier. The pods of 'Amethyst' were	Amethyst Royal Burgundy	 74 89	7.42 7.58
slimmer, straighter and more lustrous but not better tasting. Yields were comparable.		(1	9 sites)



5. Bean, Yellow Filet	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
The plants of 'Soleil' were healthier, more productive and	Goldito	25	63	5.75
more tolerant to drought. Its pods were slimmer and smaller;	Soleil	75	88	7.38
they did not get seedy. Gardeners liked the quality of 'Goldito'			(9 sites)



6. Bean, Yardlong Pole

'Gita' was earlier and more productive while 'Orient Wonder' impressed gardeners with its lush vines. Pod size and flavor were comparable. Some first-time growers of yardlong bean marveled at its asparagus-like flavor; others disliked it.

	Variety			Rating (Avg.)
,	Gita Orient Wonder	50 50	75 50	7.25 7.50
			(1	0 sites)

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety



7. Beet

The roots of 'Detroit Supreme' were a rich red and stayed sweet even when large. 'Early Wonder' displayed strong early growth and tall tops, making it perfect for bunching. Its roots held their size in the field and were uniform.

51	73	7.61				
49	70	7.60				
(11 sites in 2011						
	49 (11	49 70 (11 sites				

and 20 sites in 2012)

Pref Rec Rating



8. Carrot, Chantenay

'Hercules' plants were healthy and matured quickly. Its roots were deep orange, smooth and crisp. Its flavor was fresh and sweet. 'Hercules' yields were outstanding and its roots stored well. 'Royal Chantenay' was inferior in all respects.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Hercules Royal Chantenay	88 12	88 56	7.75 5.69
	(9	sites	in 2011



Pref Rec Rating



9. Carrot, Nantes

'Laguna' displayed superior emergence, superb vigor and higher yields. Its roots were less uniform than those of 'Nelson' but longer (up to 10 inches) and just as flavorful. 'Nelson' roots were straight, smooth, sweet and crisp.

•			_
Laguna Nelson	53 47	72 62	7.35 7.11
		(4	9 sites



10. Corn, Bicolor

'Trinity' showed strong seedling vigor and it matured several days earlier. Its sweetness was splendid and especially valued as the first corn of the season. 'Mystique' produced superior yields. Its ears were larger but not quite as sweet.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Mystique	41	65	7.22
Trinity	59	69	7.41

(18 sites)



11. Corn, Yellow

Gardeners struggled with spotty germination. 'Sugar Buns' showed more vigor and sturdier stalks. The appearance and flavor of its ears were slightly preferred. 'Spring Treat' was earlier for many gardeners. Yields were comparable.

Spring Treat	44	41	5.33
Sugar Buns	56	55	5.61
	(15	sites	in 2011

and 17 sites in 2012)

Pref Rec Rating

Pref Rec Rating

Pref Rec Rating



12. Corn, Flint/Ornamental

There was very little interest in this trial. 'Bloody Butcher' impressed gardeners with its tall, 10-foot stalks. Wind and deer challenged gardeners. There were no comments on kernel color or quality.

Bloody Butcher 100	100	7.50
Strubbes Orange 0	50	5.50
	(2	2 sites)



13. Corn, Popcorn

'Red Beauty' stalks were more vigorous and productive. Its deep red (and a few yellow) ears were much larger and more attractive. Its popcorn tasted better. The tiny ears of 'Strawberry' were cute but inferior as popcorn.

Deal Dearts	00	-00	0.00
Red Beauty	80	80	6.60
Strawberry	20	10	4.20
		(1	0 sites)



14. Cucumber, Pickling

'Homemade Pickles' vines were more vigorous and much more productive. Gardeners preferred the longer, narrower shape of its cukes for pickling. The cukes of 'Jackson Classic' grew faster and fatter on the vine.
 Variety
 (%)
 (%)
 (Avg.)

 Homemade P.
 63
 88
 7.35

 Jackson Classic
 37
 47
 6.45

Pref

(33 sites)

Rec Rating



15. Cucumber, Slicing Burpless

'Sweeter Yet' was earlier and more productive. Its cukes were long, smooth and thin without large seeds. Most gardeners preferred its taste. 'Tanja' cukes were larger, longer and wider—more like a traditional slicer.

 Sweeter Yet
 63
 84
 7.86

 Tanja
 37
 42
 6.64

Pref

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety

(33 sites)

Rec Rating

Rec Rating



16. Cucumber, Slicing Classic

'Straight Eight' produced earlier and produced more. Its cukes were uniform in shape and well suited to both slicing and pickling. Its vines were just as healthy as those of 'Marketmore 76' and the flavor of its cukes was comparable.

 Marketmore 76
 25
 53
 6.31

 Straight Eight
 75
 83
 7.77

 (9 sites in 2011)

Pref

Pref

and 11 sites in 2012)



17. Cucumber, Slicing Hybrid

'General Lee' produced higher yields and these yields were surprisingly early. The quality of its cukes was as good, if not better than that of 'Raider'. 'Raider' was healthy and productive—but showed no advantages over 'General Lee'.

 General Lee
 67
 78
 7.89

 Raider
 33
 67
 6.89

(10 sites)

Rec Rating



18. Greens, Chinese Cabbage

Both varieties produced good yields of light green, mild tasting leaves. 'Fun Jen' was preferred by a slight margin; gardeners liked its flavor and frilly leaves. The productivity of 'Tokyo Bekana' was noted. Flea beetles were a problem.

 Variety
 Pref
 Rec
 Rating

 Fun Jen
 60
 80
 7.40

 Tokyo Bekana
 40
 80
 7.00

(6 sites)



19. Greens, Mizuna

'Early' grew vigorously all summer—cutting after cutting—and had a fresh, mild flavor. 'Ruby Streaks' went to seed in midsummer and had a more pungent flavor. Its red veins contrasted nicely with other greens in salads.

Early 57 86 8.57 Ruby Streaks 43 29 6.29

Pref

Rec

(7 sites)

Rating



20. Kohlrabi

'Winner' showed superior seedling vigor and matured earlier. Its bulbs were uniform and had a mild, refreshing taste. Some gardeners preferred 'Grand Duke' for its stronger flavor. Yields were comparable.

 Grand Duke
 23
 57
 6.71

 Winner
 77
 64
 7.50

Pref

(15 sites)

Rec Rating

Rec Rating



21. Lettuce, Bibb

'Buttercrunch' was preferred for its dark green leaves, mild and bitter-free flavor, and superior yields. Both it and 'Winter Density' resisted bolting and produced lettuce through spring and much of summer.

 Buttercrunch
 75
 86
 8.07

 Winter Density
 25
 64
 7.00

Pref

(29 sites)

All spices	22. Lettuce, Leaf	Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
S 123	Both of these heat-resistant varieties produced good yields of deep green leaves throughout the spring and summer.	Tropicana Two Star	57 43	86 72	7.72 6.86
	Most gardeners liked both varieties but preferred the taste of 'Tropicana', giving it a slight edge overall.				in 2011 n 2012)
	23. Lettuce, Romaine	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	Both varieties were healthy, productive and delicious. Many gardeners rated the varieties as similar for health, earliness and yield. Most preferred 'Green Forest' for its deep green and tender leaves, mild flavor and superb yields.	Coastal Star Green Forest	35 65	65 81 (3	6.88 7.42 0 sites)
- 10 th	and tender leaves, mild flavor and superb yields. 24. Melon, Cantaloupe Early	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	Most gardeners did not recommend either variety. 'Goddess' got a slight edge in earliness and yield. Its finely netted melons were more attractive and less subject to splitting.	Goddess Halona	50 50	48 46	6.11 6.18
No contra	The flavors of it and 'Halona' were good but not exceptional.				in 2011 n 2012)
No. of the last of	25. Melon, Cantaloupe Main Season	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
6.	Most gardeners preferred 'Sarah's Choice'. It ripened earlier and several gardeners preferred its taste. 'Hannah's Choice' was more productive. Gardeners were impressed with the flavor of both varieties and rated them highly.	Hannah's Choice Sarah's Choice		71 86	7.71 8.14 8 sites)
3211	26. Melon, Galia	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	'Arava' produced higher yields than 'Diplomat' and matched it for earliness. Its melons, lightly netted and 3 pounds in weight, were more attractive and sweeter. Ninety-one	Arava Diplomat	64 36	91 45	7.64 6.18
THE SECOND	percent of gardeners recommended 'Arava'—remarkable.			(1	1 sites)
Marie I	27. Melon, Green Flesh	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	Neither variety did well. Fruits were small (1 pound) and rarely matured before frost. 'Jenny Lind' was preferred due to its higher yields and better taste, but the vast majority of	Eden's Gem Jenny Lind	39 61	30 20	5.09 5.89
	gardeners would not recommend it or 'Eden's Gem'.				in 2011 n 2012)
	28. Okra, Green	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	Few gardeners were interested in this trial. 'Clemson Spineless', the leading variety in the USA, was preferred due to its more slender pods. Its earliness, yield and taste	Clemson Spine Star of David	20	60 20	5.60 5.60
	qualities were comparable with those of 'Star of David'.				in 2011 n 2012)



Both varieties performed well. Gardeners enjoyed the beauty

of 'Carmine Splendor' blossoms; its pods were milder in

flavor. The plants of 'Red Burgundy' were more vigorous,

healthier and produced an earlier crop of pods.

Variety

Carmine Splendor 50

Red Burgundy

29. Okra, Red

7.63

7.00

(9 sites)

Pref Rec Rating

75

75

50

'Lincoln' matured earlier and produced superb crops of attractive pods, even when the weather was unusually warm. 'Green Arrow' had larger pods with more peas per pod, but many gardeners felt 'Lincoln' peas were more delicious. Green Arrow Lincoln 58 79 (26 sites	7.68 s in 2011 in 2012)		
	. Pating		
31. Pea, Snap Variety Pref Re	, italing		
'Sugar Ann' showed more vigor and produced its first pods a week earlier. Its vines kept producing despite the warm temps, leading to higher yields. Its pods were just as, if not more beautiful and delicious as those of 'Sugar Sprint'.			
32. Pea, Snow Variety Pref Re	Rating		
'Oregon Sugar Pod 2' pods were more delicious and stayed slim for a long time in the garden. Its vines were more productive. 'Dwarf Grey Sugar' matured earlier; its purple blossoms produced small but uniform and attractive pods.			
33. Pumpkin, Jack-O'-Lantern Variety Pref Re	Rating		
'Racer Plus' was earlier and more productive. Its pumpkins Magic Lantern 48 60 were more uniform and rounder. The pumpkins of 'Magic Lantern' were bigger (about 14 pounds versus 10 pounds (23 site	6.53		
	(23 sites in 2011 and 22 sites in 2012)		
34. Radish, Red Variety Pref Re	Rating		
'Rover' matured earlier and had higher yields. Its roots were brighter red, more uniform and usually larger. Gardeners preferred the crisp taste of its pure white flesh, too. 'Cherry Belle' was good—but 'Rover' was just a little bit better. Cherry Belle Rover 64 57 (4 sites and 10 sites 65)	7.21 s in 2011		
35. Rutabaga Variety Pref Re	Rating		
Both varieties suffered severe damage from flea beetles and a wide array of other insect pests. 'American Purple Top' was preferred for the milder yellow flesh of its roots. Yields were comparable with those of 'Laurentian'.			
36. Spinach, Savoy Leaf Variety Pref Re	Rating		
Varieties were very similar. Both produced lots of delicious spinach and resisted bolting. Most gardeners preferred 'Donkey'. They liked its deep green color and rounded leaf shape. It matched, if not exceeded 'Tyee' in taste qualities.			
37. Squash, Summer Scallop Variety Pref Re	Rating		
'Sunburst' and 'Y-Star' were productive and their fruits were colorful. Gardeners liked both varieties, but most preferred 'Sunburst'. Its vines were especially healthy and the tender flesh of its fruits cooked faster and worked better in recipes.			



38. Squash, Summer Zucchini

The vines of 'Spineless Beauty' produced earlier and produced more zucchini. Its medium green, lightly speckled fruits were attractive and tender. 'Spineless Perfection' matched it for taste but showed no superior qualities.

variety	(%)	(%)	(Avg.)
Sp. Beauty	72	94	7.83
Sp. Perfection	28	61	6.89

(18 sites)

Pref Rec Rating



39. Watermelon, Red

'Sweet Dakota Rose' melons were more than twice as big (15 pounds). Its flesh was sweet and more flavorful. More gardeners recommended 'Blacktail Mountain'; it was earlier and more reliable. Neither variety was very productive.

Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
Blacktail Mtn. Swt. Dak. Rose	45 55	63 54	6.45 5.86

(30 sites)



40. Watermelon, Red Large

'Legacy' produced decent crops of large (20 pound), well-shaped, brightly striped melons. Its flesh was sweet and juicy. The dark green rind and extra large size of 'Verona' were appealing, but most melons did not ripen before frost.

Legacy	69	77	6.93
Verona	31	40	4.66

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety

(6 sites in 2011 and 13 sites in 2012)

Pref Rec Rating

Prof Rec Rating

Pref Rec Rating

Pref Rec Rating

Pref Rec Rating

Pref Rec Rating



41. Watermelon, Yellow

'Early Moonbeam' matured earlier and produced more melons. 'Sweet Siberian' melons were almost twice as big (10 pounds) and gardeners enjoyed its apricot-color flesh. Gardeners liked both varieties, but neither was exceptional.

Early Moonbeam	56	80	6.22
Sweet Siberian	44	80	6.33

(12 sites)



42. Basil, Italian

'Italian Large Leaf' showed strong vigor, leading to the growth of taller, fuller plants. It matured earlier. Gardeners liked its mild flavor as much as the classic clove-like flavor of 'Genovese'. 'Genovese' was tender; well suited for cooking.

variety	1 101	1 (00	rtating
Genovese	44	72	6.59
		12	0.59
Italian Large Lea	af 56	72	7.29

(19 sites)



43. Basil, Lemon

Both varieties were very healthy and produced lots of leaves with intense lemon flavor. They rated similarly for most traits including yield and flavor. The bright green leaves of 'Mrs. Burns' made it an attractive plant.

Mrs. Burns 40 8	8.33
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(10 sites)



44. Basil, Purple

The varieties were comparable for most traits, including earliness, yield and taste. A slight edge went to 'Amethyst Improved' for its superior vigor at many gardens. Both varieties suffered from weak seedling growth at some sites.

,			
Amethyst Impr.	67	67	6.56
Red Rubin	33	44	6.33
		(9 sites)



45. Cilantro

Varieties performed similarly for all traits, including health, yield and taste qualities. 'Caribe' impressed gardeners with its robust plants and fragrant, flavorful leaves. 'Santo' grew quickly and gardeners enjoyed its flavor.

varioty	1 101	1 100	rtating
Caribe	60	88	8.07
Santo	40	75	7.53
		/1	6 citos)

(16 sites)

	46. Dill	Variety	Pref (%)	Rec (%)	Rating (Avg.)
	'Bouquet' was impressive from germination through harvest. Its plants grew vigorously and matured earlier. Both it and 'Dukat' produced good yields of umbels and leaves. Gardeners liked the looks and flavors of both varieties.	Bouquet Dukat	73 27	92 58 (1	8.18 7.27 3 sites)
	47. Parsley	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	'Giant of Italy' rated higher in all traits—except taste. The flat-leaf plants were sturdier, fuller and more productive. Many gardeners recommended the curled-leaf 'Forest Green' for its flavor.	Forest Green Giant of Italy	45 55	80 80	7.40 7.80 1 sites)
	48. Cosmos, Mixed	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	'Double Click' bloomed earlier and produced more flowers. Most gardeners preferred it, yet still were hoping for more flowers. The plants of 'Sensation' were tall and vigorous but did not bloom at many sites.	Double Click Sensation	69 31	50 38 (2	5.22 3.94 2 sites)
	49. Cosmos, White	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	'Sonata White' bloomed earlier and produced more flowers. Every gardener in the trial recommended it. 'Sensation Purity' grew more vigorously but was very slow to bloom in many gardens.	Sensation Purity Sonata White	/ 25 75	60 100	6.60 7.80 6 sites)
	50. Cosmos, Sulphur	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	'Bright Lights' was very impressive. Its plants were healthy and loaded with flowers. It bloomed earlier and more profusely. 'Polidor' also grew well and was well liked, but its performance was overshadowed by 'Bright Lights'.	Bright Lights Polidor	71 29	88 75	8.88 8.38 9 sites)
	51. Sunflower, Orange Cutting	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	"Pro Cut Orange' was preferred by most gardeners. Its plants grew vigorously and bloomed earlier. 'Zohar' also grew well. Both of these pollenless varieties are well suited to cut	Pro Cut Orange Zohar			7.74 6.99 in 2011
	flower production in North Dakota.	а	nd 14	sites i	n 2012)
	52. Sweet Pea	Variety		Rec	Rating
A	'Mammoth Choice' bloomed earlier. Its colors were vibrant and its stems were longer. The exceptional fragrance, array of colors and long blooming season of 'Royal' generated enthusiasm.	Mammoth Choice Royal	43		5.83 5.91 in 2011 n 2012)
	53. Zinnia, Cactus	Variety	Pref	Rec	Rating
	Gardeners enjoyed both varieties and gave them high ratings. Many rated 'Burpeeanna Giants' and 'Giant Cactus' as similar for all traits. Neither variety distinguished itself from the other. Their flowers were big and showy.	Burpeeanna G. Giant Cactus			7.78 7.45 in 2011 n 2012)



54. Zinnia, Cutting

The sturdy plants of both varieties produced lots of showy, 2-inch blooms for cutting. The varieties rated similarly for all traits. Most gardeners preferred 'Cut & Come Again' for its lovely colors and its superior performance in dry 2012.

 Cut & Come Ag.
 79
 89
 8.15

 Oklahoma
 21
 81
 7.56

Variety

Variety

Variety

Variety

(11 sites in 2011 and 15 sites in 2012)

Rec Rating

(Avg.)



55. Zinnia, Classic

Both varieties were prolific producers of giant, gorgeous flowers. Varieties performed similarly, but a slight edge went to 'State Fair' for its notable health and production of flowers. Several gardeners felt 'State Fair' flowers were more vibrant.

Variety Pref Rec Rating

Giant Dahlia Mix 36 91 7.91

State Fair 64 100 8.45



Rec Rating



56. Zinnia, Giant Lime

The lime green flowers were striking and complimented other flowers in arrangements. They were long lasting as cut flowers. These varieties were very similar; a slight edge went to 'Queen Lime' for the fullness of its plants.

Benary's G. Lime 46 79 7.27 Queen Lime 54 82 7.46 (13 sites in 2011

and 22 sites in 2012)

Pref Rec Rating

Prof Rec Rating



57. Zinnia, Giant Orange

'Benary's Giant Orange' put on a dazzling display of big, bright blooms. The flowers were showy and long lasting in bouquets. 'Inca', a cactus type of zinnia, was eye-catching but less impressive overall.

Benary's G. Or.	89	91	8.55
Inca	11	73	7.00

(11 sites)



58. Zinnia, Giant Scarlet

'Giant Dahlia Scarlet' blooms were bright red, big and bold. 'Scarlet Flame' showed strong seedling vigor and bloomed earlier. Its flowers were a deeper shade of red. Both varieties were attractive in the garden and as a cut flower.

variety	1 101	1 (00	rtating
Giant Dahlia Sc. Scarlet Flame	72 28	84 84	7.79 7.53
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