

# Colorado State University



### From the Gardens...



How is it already July next week??!! After a long cool and wet spring, summer seems to be here. At least we have had a few dry and warmer days. No doubt more warm and dry days ahead.

Planting Success! The 2023 annual and perennial flower trial beds are planted! The CSU trial garden crew and a great group of Master Gardener volunteers from Larimer and Weld Counties worked to plant over 1,100 different accessions, with a grand total of nearly 20,000 individual plants that were planted in the gardens, including the annual beds, annual pots, perennial trials, perennial demonstration garden, and the Plant Select gardens. (See a couple of planting pictures below.)

Thankfully, through all the opportunities for Mother Nature to delay things, we only had to reschedule one planting day due to precipitation. And we also had a bit of reorganization and intermittent planting for a few seed propagated species entries that were slow to put on growth in the greenhouse. Not a surprise, considering a lot of overcast and cool weather!

High five to all those who made it a success!... And will continue to make this a showcase garden over the coming months. Their hard work and effort will undoubtedly be appreciated by the industry and the greater community.

Now that summer is here, the plants should take off and hopefully fill in quite nicely! I am looking forward to see the gardens grow and the visitors enjoy some wonderful plants! And if you don't already have it on your calendar, we hope you will join us on Tuesday August 8th, 2023, for our Trial Evaluation Day to help us to evaluate 100-150 of our more than 1,100 entries. More information coming soon.

The 2022-23 Cool Season Trials Report has been published. And the call for entries of the 2023-2024 has been sent with a deadline of July 7<sup>th</sup> for entry information.

Much of the remaining newsletter is devoted to introducing a great group of students who started working for the gardens this summer and a couple who stayed on, and whom you might recognize! Again, these gardens wouldn't happen without a lot of hard work and interested people.

I hope you have a great July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. As always, don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns!

Dr. Chad Miller

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**Get to know the 2023 Flower Trial Crew!**



### **Annual Trial Garden Coordinator**

Hello, I am Tate Erickson, and I am going into my final semester as a Colorado State University undergrad. In my last 3 years I have double-majored in Horticulture - specifically Environmental Horticulture: Nursery and Landscape Management as well as Horticulture: Controlled Environments. I have always been interested in the landscape, eating a lot of dirt as an infant to gardening with my mom and grandfather. While young, I invested time into a lawn care business and later got hired at a local greenhouse in Rapid City, South Dakota. I lost track of time being there - 2 years immersed in the green industry, propagation, and spending much time learning annual bedding plants and vegetables prior to enrolling at Colorado State University and being hired on with The Trial Gardens. After I graduate, my goal is to intern for some botanic gardens, work in some production, and anything else I can try along the way.

I traveled to Colorado with a collection greater than 150 houseplants which has admittedly grown, being introduced to the many surrounding businesses in the Front Range. If I had to choose a favorite - houseplant would be hoya, shade annual would be Rex Begonias, xeric annual is *Bidens* - and if continued a very long list. I have a growing interest in crevice garden tolerable plants, as well as attempting to overwinter some species bordering our zone. Additional hobbies include yoga, origami, clarinet/viola/piano, paddle boarding, snowboarding, photography and modeling. I am also welcomed home by many 4 and 2 legged companions - an Aussie named Blue, (Ms.) George his cat, along with 6 chickens - Gale, Mica, Coal, Poppy, Raven, and Tiramisu.



### **Annual Trial Garden Assistant**

My name is Erin Simpson and I am a horticultural science major at Colorado State University. I am starting my third year of my degree and I plan to work towards owning my own vineyard and wine company after I graduate. I find horticulture fascinating because there are so many plants and so much to learn about them. I was born in Alberta, Canada and since then I have moved to a variety of different

places in the United States, collecting house plants along the way. I have close to 40 house plants now, but my current favorite is my *Zamioculcas zamiifolia*, more commonly known as a ZZ plant.

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**Annual Trial Garden Assistant**

My name is Lauren DiFraia and I am heading into my junior year at Colorado State University. I am currently studying Horticultural Business Management. Horticulture has become a passion of mine the more I have gotten to learn about the industry. There are so many areas of horticulture that are crucial in our world today, especially as we continue to advance. One area of horticulture I am particularly interested in is urban/city farming. I am hoping to explore this interest more once I graduate!

Westminster, Colorado is where I call home. I often visit my family there and I look forward to working with my mom and dad in our garden this summer! I love all plants, but if I had to pick a favorite, I would choose the Columbine flower. They remind me of visiting the mountains where my grandparents live. Some of my hobbies are cooking, playing soccer, and adding to my house plant collection!

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**Perennial Trial Garden Coordinator**

I am Ian McLellan and this is my second year working for the Trial Gardens. I am currently a senior studying Environmental Horticulture with a concentration in Nursery production and Landscape Management. I grew up in Northern Virginia and Southern Louisiana, before moving to Colorado. My



favorite plant is *Cornus florida*, which is the state tree and flower of Virginia. My hobbies include growing/breeding *Cannabis* and spending time in the mountains. After college I would like to move back to the mountains to continue my work in the green industry.

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#### ***Perennial Demonstration Garden Coordinator***

Hello. My name is Sam Altaffer and I'm a second-year student working on my bachelor's in Horticultural Science and transferred out of the Biochemistry Program at CSU. I grew up in Northern California, where I got my first taste of growing plants outdoors in gardening and have been interested in plant science ever since. Although new to the Horticulture program, I have roughly a year and a half work experience in a lab setting, where I studied soil and crop science. I currently enjoy growing my own plants from seed and have taken a recent interest in olericulture as I am finally starting my own home-garden this spring. My current favorite plant would have to be my *Pilea peperomioides*, as it was my first successful propagation and is growing strong. In my spare time, I enjoy hiking near Horsetooth Reservoir and baking bread.

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#### ***Perennial Demonstration Garden Assistant***

Hello, my name is Tara Conroy, and I am majoring in Landscape Architecture with a minor in Environmental Horticulture and have just completed my freshman year here at Colorado State University. The main reason horticulture has been of such interest to me is because of my father and mother. When I was young my mother had always grown flowers in front of my childhood house and tomatoes in a planter on the back porch. I used to help her water them because the afternoons were hot, meaning it had to be done every day. Later down the line, once my parents had divorced, me and my dad had started a small garden in the backyard, filled with lavender, thyme, rosemary, tomatoes, and peppers. That garden had made me and my dad closer together than we ever had been before. Covid happened a few years after, and I had started collecting houseplants. One of few joys I had found during such a hard time for everyone was watching each new leaf or bloom unravel. It gave me hope for better times. Besides taking care of houseplants and gardening with my family I don't have any horticulture work experience, but after I graduate, I plan on working for a landscape architecture firm and focusing on the planting and sustainability of the landscape before hopefully opening my own firm that specializes in sustainable

landscapes for homeowners and residential neighborhoods alike named GROOVESCAPE. I am born and raised from Denver, Colorado and my favorite plant would have to be a *Alocasia reginula* 'Black Velvet' or a *Epipremnum aureum* 'Njoy Pothos'. I am a huge Disney kid; my family and I try to go every year. My favorite Disney movie would be a tie between Lilo and Stitch or Wall-E. Along with that, I also love to camp and hike. Me and my dad have a favorite camping spot in the Glacier Basin Campground in Rocky Mountain National Park.



***Plant Select Garden Assistant***

Hi there, I'm Jo Dolphin, I use they/them pronouns. BOY do I love all things green!! My current major is in the Horticulture and Landscape Architecture department, where I'm studying Landscape Design and Contracting. This is my first year in the Landscape Design program, but this will be my third year of college. I found my true calling for plants over the pandemic, when a friend gave me a cutting of their spider plant, and I haven't turned back since! What I love about horticulture is the kind of people that it attracts. There are so many people of different backgrounds, with their own niche of what they love about plants. I personally find so much joy in going for walks in nature, looking for mushrooms, moss, weird plants, and little critters. I used to work for a few plant retailers back in Chicago, where I was born and raised. I would typically help people fuel their plant addiction by suggesting what they can add to the collection or introduce houseplants to newcomers. After I graduate, I hope to be designing both indoor and outdoor spaces alike. It's so important for humans to have a place to settle down and take a break from our everyday tasks and be in a space that doesn't require your full focus. Asking my favorite plant is like asking a parent who their favorite child is. I will say that my favorite genus of plants are Philodendrons because they have such unique shapes and habits. I hope that one day I can have a jungle of Philodendrons and other tropical plants in my home, so I can feel like I live in a terrarium. I love doing expressive makeup, experimenting with crochet, and playing cute video games like Minecraft, Animal Crossing, and Stardew Valley. I can't wait to be working for the Trial Gardens this year, it's going to be such a cool summer!! If you ever see me, feel free to stop and say hello!

**2022 "Best Of..." Winner *Spotlight* -  
Best Geranium (zonal) ground - Dynamo™ Dark Red  
from Ball FloraPlant®**



**Best Geranium (zonal) ground – Dynamo™ Dark Red from Ball FloraPlant®**

At the CSU trials, flowers had an intense shade of dark red and it was noted that there was nothing else quite like it in the trial. Plants were bred to have medium vigor and filled out nicely with a very uniform growth habit. Flowers were both striking because of their color but were also very prolific and created a high degree of flower power.

The breeder notes that it has a powerful first flush of color with more continuous blooms per plant throughout the season. It is the ultimate geranium for garden beds and large containers with its big, bright flowers and crisp, medium green leaves. There are additional colors in the Dynamo series and all were



bred to match growth habit and flower timing to create a uniform series.

#### Propagation

- **Rooting Hormone:** Optional
- **Average Days with Mist:** 9-12
- **Pinch:** No
- **Average Propagation Time (weeks):** 3-4
- **Comments:** Stick immediately upon arrival. Geraniums are best rooted in media in strip form to allow for maximum airflow and avoid foliage overlap. After initial rehydration, careful misting is required to optimize callus and root initiation. Mature leaves should show slight wilting at midday and regain turgor in the late afternoon under ideal mist conditions. Leaf petiole wilting indicates undermisting. Overmisting leads to Botrytis. Remove flower buds at transplanting.

#### Finishing

- **Soil pH:** 6.2-6.6
- **Light Levels (fc):** 3,500-6,000
- **Temperature Day:** 65-76°F (18-24°C)
- **Temperature Night:** 62-67°F (17-19°C)
- **Fertilization (ppm N):** 225-300
- **No. of Pinches:** 0
- **Plant Growth Regulators (S=spray:** Cycocel(S) 750-1,000 ppm to control growth; Florel(S) 200-300 ppm to improve branching.
- **Comments:** Keep foliage dry. Provide good air circulation.

#### Crop Time

- **4- to 5-inch (10- to 13-cm) Pots, Quarts:** 1 ppp, 8-9 weeks
- **6-inch (15-cm) Pots, Gallons:** 1-2 ppp, 9-10 weeks
- **10- to 12-inch (25- to 30-cm) Tubs or Baskets:** 4-5 ppp, 11-13 weeks

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Visit our website

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