

Colorado State University



From the Gardens...



Public Evaluation Day √. Industry Evaluation Day √.

Hello again, horticulture friends! What a busy last week; the trial gardens welcomed about 300 people for each of our evaluation day events. We had near perfect weather both days with comfortable temperatures and mostly sunny skies. It seems like just a week or two ago, we were busy transplanting in the gardens. Time flies when you're having fun and working with plants.

On Saturday the 5th, we hosted the 5th Public Evaluation Day at the trial gardens. Our friends from In Color from Tagawa Greenhouses joined us, providing planting activities for dozens of kids—from all ages! We had Hal's Coffee truck parked out front as well, which was a hit with visitors. Folks joined for tours on the hours and visitors were full of questions and eager to learn about the gardens. Twelve lucky folks walked away with mixed containers for their landscapes from our hourly raffles!

Visitors were given three flags to stick next to their favorite plants in the gardens. Below in the newsletter are five plants that ended up near the top of the list with the most flags. (The *final-final* tally, will be made available later this season, after all the paper ballots are tabulated and online voting ends.)

The top plant with the most flags, was Dahlegria® Apricot Tricolor from Syngenta. This is no surprise as dahlias have been a popular crop in recent years and there have been some wonderful selections available in the market. Over the last two years, a couple dahlias were repeat winners (City Lights Purple from Selecta One and Lubega Dark Red Glow and Lubega Dark Velvet, both from Benary Plus)

On Tuesday August 8th, we hosted the Industry Evaluation Day, as a part of the Colorado Destination Week. Again, with near perfect weather--with the brief thunderstorm rolling through *after* all things were cleaned up! Hundreds of industry members, near and far, Master Gardeners, and other horticulture professionals came to Fort Collins to evaluate the trials. It was great to be able to catch up with friends in the industry and to meet many new ones! The festivities continued the next day, with trials open for viewing at the Denver Botanic Gardens, Rocky Mountain Liners, and at Welby Gardens! A couple of fun, jam-packed couple of days.

We appreciate everyone who submitted ratings and their picks for the best plants in this years trial. Our second evaluation day with the advisory committee will be on September 8th. This second round of evaluations will help determine our "Best of..." winners for 2023. Stay tuned for the formal announcement later this fall.

All in all, both events were successful, especially for my first season at the trial gardens! These events don't happen without lots of help and significant effort and planning. A big shout out and "Thanks!" to David and the trial garden crew for all their meticulous work and preparing the gardens; Karen from the HLA department; and our great industry partners. Thanks again to all who make these gardens a reality!

Just because the evaluation days have passed, doesn't mean the gardens are done! If you haven't stopped by for a visit, please do! The annual and perennial trial gardens continue to look great, as does the perennial demonstration garden! The fall semester of classes begins in less than a week... Yikes---I need to get working on that course syllabus!

Please reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns! chad.miller@colostate.edu or 607.351.0760

Public Evaluation Day Photos



In Color booth provided a planting activity for kids of all ages!



Flags in front of one of the popular dahlias, Dalegria® Apricot Tricolor.



Visitors observing the container plantings on public evaluation days.



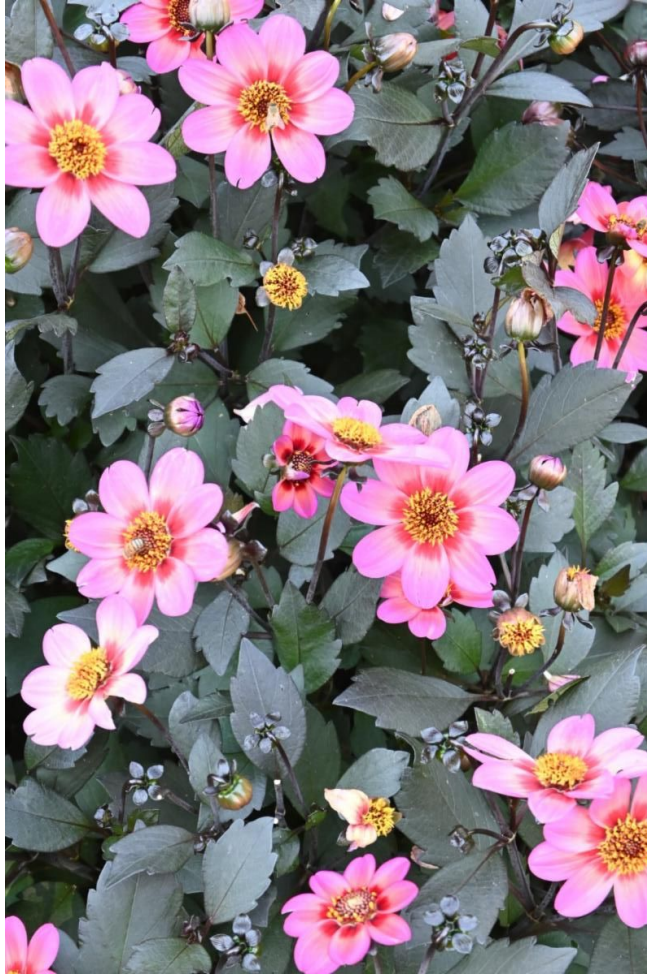
Research Associate and Trial Garden Guru, David Staats giving the first tour of the day!

Favorites from the 2023 Public Evaluation Day Voting

Dahlia 'Dahlegria® Apricot Tricolor' from Syngenta

This Dahlia was a strong favorite due to its impressive combination of dark foliage and large, colorful flowers. Blooms had a unique blend of three colors that really stood out against the very dark leaves. The single petaled flowers were also a magnet for pollinators. The attractive plants had a nice upright growth habit and size that would work well in both the landscape as well as a container.





Salvia 'Black and Bloom' from Ball FloraPlant

Deep blue flowers and a black stem made a dramatic visual combination which was extremely popular. Plants were noted for a larger flower and darker stems than similar varieties. The breeder noted that it was developed to thrive in drought and heat as well as humidity.



Sunbeckia® 'Luna' from Flamingo Holland/Bull Breeding

Few plants have the flower power as this one which caught the eyes of almost everyone even from across the garden. The large flowers are very showy by themselves but the sheer number of blooms is

also very impressive as the foliage is virtually obscured by yellow blooms. The flowers are long lasting for a great display lasting late into the season.



Ptilotus 'Joey'® from Benary®

Few flowers in the garden have a form as unique as this one. The large conical spikes of feathery flowers

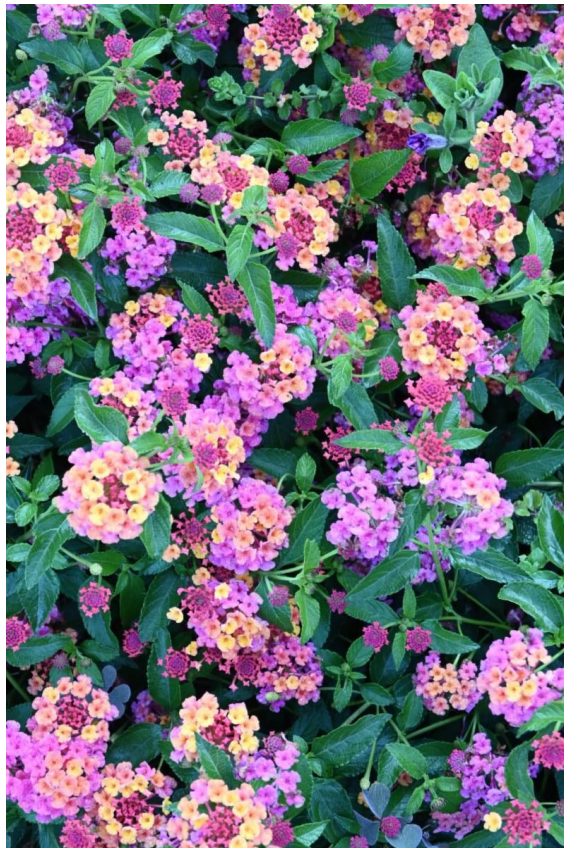
have a great lavender color and are very long lasting. The original species comes from central Australia and have thick silver green foliage which helps make it very tolerant of drought and heat.



Lantana 'Passion Fruit' from Ball FloraPlant®

Selected for a combination of prolific flowering and great multi-colored flower with tropical fruit colors. It also is known for having consistent flowering through the season and not cycling in and out of bloom. Dark green foliage really helps the flower color "pop". The uniform habit makes a great groundcover for

the garden. Plants are very tolerant of heat and drought.



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