

Release January 10, 2005

NEWS RELEASE

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2005 MGA Green Thumb Awards Given to 10 New Gardening Products

Five new plant varieties and five new gardening products have won 2005 MGA Green Thumb Awards presented by the Mailorder Gardening Association. Bringing home awards in the Plants, Bulbs and Seeds division were Prime-Jan® and Prime-Jim® Primocane-Fruiting Blackberries from Stark Bro's Nurseries, Ava's Hummingbird Mint (*Agastache* x 'Ava') from High Country Gardens, Rumbo Hybrid Winter Squash from J.W. Jung Seed Co., 'August Afternoons' Perennial Garden from High Country Gardens, and Petunia Flambé from Park's Seeds.

Honored in the Tools, Supplies and Accessories division were the Seed Stick Planter from Johnny's Selected Seeds, Watering Weed Mat from Gardener's Supply, Gardens Alive! Organic Garden Kit from Gardens Alive!, T8 Light Technology from Gardener's Supply, and Complete Organic Potato Patch Kit from Wood Prairie Farm.

Winners of the 2005 MGA Green Thumb Awards were chosen by an independent panel of garden writers and editors. The winning products were selected based on their uniqueness, technological innovation, ability to solve a gardening problem or provide a gardening opportunity, and potential appeal to gardeners.

The MGA Green Thumb Awards recognize outstanding new garden products available by mail or online. The awards are sponsored by the Mailorder Gardening Association, the world's largest nonprofit association of companies that sell garden products directly to consumers. For more information visit the MGA website at www.mailordergardening.com.



2005 MGA Green Thumb Award Winners – Plants, Bulbs and Seeds



Prime-Jan® and Prime-Jim® Primocane-Fruiting Blackberries Stark Bro's Nurseries

Prime-Jan® and Prime-Jim® are unique in the world of blackberries because they are the first to produce berries on primocanes (first-year canes) as well as on floricanes (canes from the previous year). In climates where winter damage to floricanes reduces berry production the following summer, Prime-Jan and Prime-Jim will increase fruit yields. These new varieties will also allow a later season crop into the fall, which is not possible with current varieties. Prime-Jan and Prime-Jim are available from Stark Bro's, 1-800-325-4180, www.starkbros.com.



**Prime-Jan® and Prime-Jim®
Primocane-Fruiting
Blackberries
Stark Bro's Nurseries**

Ava's Hummingbird Mint (*Agastache* x 'Ava')

High Country Gardens

Ava's Hummingbird Mint is a tall, robust herbaceous perennial, the result of hybridizing two native Southwestern U.S. species—*Agastache cana* and *Agastache barberi*. The large rose-pink flowers begin blooming in mid-summer and continue for months, and the raspberry-red calyxes retain their intense coloration, which keeps the plant beautiful until the first hard frost. This stunning plant is rabbit resistant, deer resistant and cold hardy in USDA zones 5-9. At maturity, Ava's Hummingbird Mint can reach 3-5 feet tall and 24 inches wide. Available from High Country Gardens, 1-800-925-9387; www.highcountrygardens.com.



Ava's Hummingbird Mint
High Country Gardens



Rumbo Hybrid Winter Squash
J.W. Jung Seed Co.

Rumbo Hybrid Winter Squash

J.W. Jung Seed Co.

Rumbo is either a pumpkin that tastes like a winter squash or a winter squash that looks like a pumpkin. The flattened, ribbed fruits look somewhat like Cinderella pumpkins, but the flavor is that of a superior-quality squash. Yields are higher than for most other winter squashes, and the 14- to 15-pound fruits are so pretty they can be grown for their ornamental value, too. The skin color is very shiny orange-yellow, and the thick inside flesh is deeper orange-yellow with excellent flavor that's sweeter than an acorn squash. Rumbo Winter Squash mature in 95-100 days from sowing seeds. A packet of 25 seeds sells for \$2.75 from J.W. Jung Seed Co., 1-800-247-5864, www.jungseed.com.

'August Afternoons' Perennial Garden

High Country Gardens

The 'August Afternoons' Perennial Garden, which includes ornamental grasses and three new plant varieties, blooms in shades of blue, pink and ivory from mid-summer through early fall with blossoms that attract hummingbirds and butterflies. 'August Afternoons' thrives in USDA zones 5-9 in ordinary, well-drained soil in full sun. The collection includes one each of *Miscanthus* 'Silberfeder', *Agastache* x 'Ava' and *Perovskia*, two each of *Echinacea* 'Magnus' and *Lavandula* 'Hidcote Giant', three each of *Calamagrostis* 'Overdam' and *Sedum* 'Autumn Joy' and four *Origanum* x 'Rotkugel' for a total of 17 plants. The garden, which includes a planting diagram and maintenance guide, sells for \$82.25 from High Country Gardens, 1-800-925-9387; www.highcountrygardens.com.



'August Afternoons' Perennial Garden
High Country Gardens

Petunia Flambé

Park's Seeds

Petunia Flambé (also known as Dolce Flambé) is a new variety from Italy that is already taking Europe by storm. The merrily ruffled 3-inch-wide flowers are suffused with rose, lemon and cream tones over white. These long-lasting blooms are held wide open all over a compact 8-10 inch high and wide plant that's perfect for containers of all kinds and is a gorgeous addition to any garden. Flambé is a multilfora-type petunia, with masses and masses of flowers right up into autumn in mild climates. No two of these soft pastel flowers are exactly alike. Petunia Flambé is available from Park's Seeds, 1-800-845-3369, www.parkseed.com.



Petunia Flambé
Park's Seeds

2005 Green Thumb Award Winners – Tools, Supplies and Accessories



Seed Stick Planter
Johnny's Selected Seeds

Seed Stick Planter

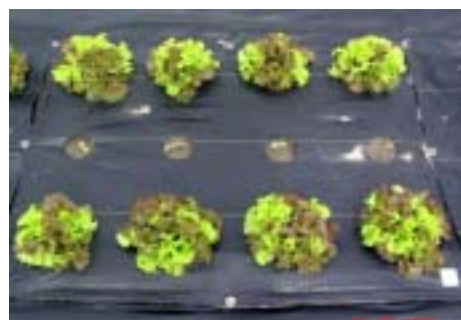
Johnny's Selected Seeds

The Seed Stick Planter is an ingenious new device that enables a gardener to plant seeds while standing up. Just fill the seed hopper with seeds, then push the Seed Stick Planter into the ground. Each time the Seed Stick Planter is pushed into the ground, one seed is moved from the hopper to the desired planting depth automatically. The lightweight, comfortable-to-use design makes for very quick planting without bending over. Great for planting sunflowers, corn, squash, cucumbers, pumpkins, melons and more. The sturdy construction will ensure years of trouble-free performance. Sells for \$65 exclusively from Johnny's Selected Seeds, 1-877-JOHNYS, www.johnnyseeds.com.

Watering Weed Mat

Gardener's Supply

The Watering Weed Mat combines two useful gardening devices into one easy-to-use unit. It's a heavy-duty polypropylene mat with a soaker hose woven in. Just lay the Watering Weed Mat on garden soil and you won't have to weed or water all summer. The 12-Hole Mat has 4-inch diameter holes for tomatoes, peppers and eggplants. The 5-Row Mat has planting slots for five rows of carrots, radishes, onions, lettuce, spinach or other row crops. The mats can be connected for full-garden coverage. Connectors, flow regulator and stakes are included with each mat, which measures 58 inches by 44 inches and sells for \$69.95. Available from Gardener's Supply, 1-800-955-3370, www.gardeners.com.



Watering Weed Mat
Gardener's Supply



Gardens Alive!® Organic Garden Kit

Gardens Alive!®

The Gardens Alive!® Organic Garden Kit contains virtually everything needed to grow fresh, homegrown vegetables. The kit includes four raised bed corner joints, one weed barrier mat, two 16-quart bags of Gardener's Gold™ Premium Compost, a tomato support, Green Guard™ Plant Growth Enhancer, and a two-pound bag of Garden Rich™ Fertilizer. Just add four 2" x 6" boards and your own topsoil. The Gardens Alive! Organic Garden Kit is available with 10 varieties of organic seeds for \$74.95, or without seeds for \$59.95. Exclusively from Gardens Alive!, (513) 354-1482, www.GardensAlive.com.



Gardens Alive!® Organic Garden Kit
Gardens Alive!®

Gardener's Gold, Green Guard, Garden Rich and Gardens Alive! are trademarks of Gardens Alive!, Inc.



T8 Light Technology
Gardener's Supply

T8 Light Technology

Gardener's Supply

T8 Light Technology is an energy- and light-efficient indoor lighting system that provides true color and optimum light output. Indoor plants and seed-starts benefit from the full-spectrum, high-output light. The slim profile of T8 lamps make them more energy-efficient than other fluorescent lights. The electronic ballasts use solid-state circuitry (not heavy copper windings) to produce more light per watt with less wasted heat.

The electronic ballasts nearly eliminate annoying flicker and hum, and T8 fluorescents have better, more consistent light output over the life of the lamp. The T8 Light Technology fixture with bulbs sells for \$99.95 from Gardener's Supply, 1-800-955-3370, www.gardeners.com.

Complete Organic Potato Patch Kit

Wood Prairie Farm

Here's everything you need to grow and enjoy a bumper crop of organic spuds from your garden. Included are four different varieties of Maine Double-Certified Organic Seed potatoes—early blue Caribé, popular Yukon Gold, beautiful Red Cloud and baking spud extraordinaire Elba. Plant, weed and harvest your crop of potatoes with a rugged American-made hand hoe. Fertilize with Wood Prairie Farm Organic Potato Fertilizer. At the end of the season, collect your harvest in the large Maine handcrafted wooden garden hod. The Complete Organic Potato Patch Kit, which also includes the Organic Potato Growing Guide and Potato Recipe Booklet, sells for \$39.95 from Wood Prairie Farm, 1-800-829-9765, www.woodprairie.com.



Complete Organic Potato Patch Kit
Wood Prairie Farm

The Mailorder Gardening Association, the world's largest nonprofit association of companies that sell garden products directly to consumers, sponsors the MGA Green Thumb Awards each year. For more information visit the MGA website at www.mailordergardening.com.