EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER

Announcing the 2015 Annual Seed Trials!

Since 1982, University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners across the state have volunteered each year to trial selected annual vegetable and flower seeds. This important research has provided valuable information for home gardeners in Minnesota and the upper Midwest by volunteers comparing varieties and sharing their experiences through online resources and published articles.

Participation in the 2015 Annual Seed Trials is $10.00 per person. This fee covers postage, packaging, and MN state sales tax. Seed is made available through support from Extension Master Gardeners in Hennepin County, from MSHS Northern Gardener magazine and from the Master Gardener state office.

This year, the following varieties are available for trials:

1. **White Cauliflower**: ‘Snow Crown’, ‘Amazing’, ‘Snow Queen Improved’, ‘Candid Charm’, ‘Minuteman’, and ‘Terzola’. These will be started indoors under lights 5 weeks before the local frost free date.


3. **“Black” Heirloom Tomatoes**: ‘Cherokee Purple’, ‘Black Prince’, ‘Jap Black Trifle’, ‘Black Krim’, ‘Conventional’, and ‘Purple Calabash’ will be started indoors and transplanted to the garden when soil is warm and frost danger has passed.

4. **Pattypan Squash**: ‘Bennings Green Tint’, ‘Eight Ball’, ‘Peter Pan’, ‘Sunburst’, ‘Flying Saucer’, and ‘Zucchini Tondo di Piacenza’. These will be seeded directly into the garden once soil is warm and frost danger has passed.

5. **Thyme**: ‘French Summer’, ‘German Winter’, ‘Lemon’, ‘Mother of Thyme’, ‘ProEasy’, and ‘Orange’. These will be started indoors 8 weeks before local frost-free date and transplanted to the garden when soil is warm and frost danger has passed.

6. **Romano Bush Beans**: ‘Roma 2’, ‘#14’, ‘’, ‘Purplat’, ‘Capitano’, ‘Navarro’, and ‘Marconi Green Bush’. These will be seeded directly into the garden once frost danger has passed and soil has warmed to 70 degrees.

7. **Pink & Red Morning Glories**: ‘Rosita’, ‘Dolce Vita’, ‘Venice Pink’, ‘Crimson Rambler’, ‘Scarlett O’Hara’, and ‘Candy Pink’. These will be started indoors and transplanted to the garden as soon as frost danger has passed. They require climbing support.

8. **Flowering Kale**: ‘Pigeon Pink’, ‘Songbird Pink’, ‘Pigeon Victoria’, ‘Nagoya Rose’, ‘Crane Rose’, and ‘Kamome Pink’. These will be sown directly into the garden 10 weeks before local average FIRST frost.
How to participate in the 2015 Annual Seed Trials:

1. Complete the Annual Seed Trials Request form and submit it by **February 16, 2015**. Note the requirements for each trial, e.g., start seed indoors, provide climbing support, etc..

2. Commit a 36” row of garden space per trial variety. Each trial consists of six varieties, so each trial requires 36” x 6 varieties = 18’ row per trial.

3. Send your Annual Seed Trials Request form with a **$10.00 check, written to the University of Minnesota**, for postage, packaging, and MN state sales tax. The cost is $10.00 whether you grow one trial variety or all eight. The seed is free regardless of the number of varieties you trial.

The Annual Seed Trials committee will compile seed requests and fulfill as many as possible. Note that the committee makes every effort to fulfill trial variety requests; however, you may not receive all the varieties you requested. Seeds will be shipped by USPS in mid March. Specific instructions on planting the seed, growing the plants, and evaluating the results will be included.

Participants in the Annual Seed Trials are expected to grow the plants as directed and enter the data online, if possible. Also, participants should complete the hard copy evaluation form and mail it to the committee by **October 15, 2015**. Results will be compiled and shared afterward with all U of M Extension Master Gardeners. The results will also be published in Northern Gardener magazine.

Master Gardeners may count the time spent growing and evaluating the Annual Seed Trials toward their annual required volunteer hours.

Here’s to a great 2015 Annual Seed Trials project, and we look forward to your participation!

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Annual Seed Trials Committee  
University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners

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