GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Breeder Blair Winner to Retire

Chris Beytes

Blair Winner, who's been breeding plants for PanAmerican Seed for 43 years, announced his retirement as of March 29.

Blair got his start with PAS in 1975. He began breeding geraniums, both zonal and ivy, and created the first F1 hybrid ivy geranium from seed, Summer Showers. He worked on vinca early in his career and bred the first introductions for the Cooler series. He introduced Bonanza and Hot Pak French Marigolds, and the Garland series of African Marigolds. Add in Daybreak Gazania (the first F1 gazania), Guardian Delphinium, Katz Stock and Sun Up, Sunfire, SunKiss and UpTick Coreopsis, and he has a long list of popular ornamentals to his credit.

Beyond the garden and vase, Blair worked with the Ball Helix team on the technically challenging zeaxanthin marigold project, which had Blair breeding marigolds for elevated carotenoid content that, when extracted, can be used as a nutritional supplement to promote eye health.

Congrats on a long career and hopefully even longer retirement, Blair! **GT**