

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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AAS Breeder's Cup Goes to Doug Holden

Chris Beytes



It's great when someone who has spent a long, successful career in the "back room" of a breeding company greenhouse gets recognized for his or her efforts, and that's just what has happened to Doug Holden. Doug was presented with All-America Selection's Breeder's Cup, which was established in 2004 to recognize a breeder who has dramatically influenced horticulture by his or her work in bringing significant improvements to specific flower or vegetable classes. The award was presented at AAS's annual Awards Banquet, held recently at the Louisiana State University's Burden Botanic Garden.

Doug, who recently retired as Global Head of Breeding at Benary, has held a wide range of positions in his career, starting with Bodger Seed in 1986, where he bred such notable introductions as *Ageratum Hawaii Blue* and *Lobelia Palace Series*.

At Waller Flower Seed Company, Doug advanced to the position of Vice President of Research and Development, where he led the development of a new Research and Development Department, as well as bred numerous notable series, such as the *Viola Sorbet Series*, *Pacifica* and *Mediterranean Vinca*, and *Panache Pansies*.

In 1997, Doug became Research Director for Goldsmith Seeds, where he expanded the efforts of Goldsmith Plants. These products eventually became part of Syngenta Flowers' GoldFisch Brand.

Later, as Vice President of Yoder Brothers' Propagator Marketing Group, Doug dove into the cut flower and potted plant market, leading the new product development in cut flower carnations, garden mums, hibiscus, azaleas, and other annual and perennial classes.

Following a short tenure as Director of Research for Syngenta Flowers, Doug moved to Benary as the Global Head of Breeding in 2009. He was tasked with establishing a new North American Headquarters and Breeding Facility and recruiting breeders for the North American market. Thanks to Doug's work, the new Benary breeding facility has already generated its first completely U.S.-bred series, *Super Hero Marigolds* (of which *Spry* is a 2018 AAS Winner).

"I always trusted Doug's opinion of new introductions, as he always looked for the commercial benefits of any new variety," said John Whitehead, former Managing Director of Colegrave Seeds. "I am so pleased he's being given this honor, he fully deserves it.

The industry would be much less valuable today without his involvement." **GT**