

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Ping Ren Earns Breeder's Cup Award

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On Friday, September 18, at their virtual Judges Meeting and Awards Ceremony, All-America Selections honored Dr. Jianping (Ping) Ren, Senior Plant Breeder at PanAmerican Seed, with their coveted AAS Breeder's Cup Award, which was established in 2004 to recognize a plant breeder who dramatically influenced horticulture by breeding new cultivars that brought significant improvements to those classes.

Ping, who earned her Ph.D. from Cornell University, joined PanAmerican Seed in 2001 as a flower plant breeder. For the past 20 years, Ping has worked on petunia, calibrachoa, gaillardia and echinacea, with a list of about 150 vegetative and seed-propagated varieties coming from her breeding programs, including six AAS Award Winners: the first F1 gaillardia, Mesa Yellow (2010), Echinacea PowWow Wild Berry (2011), Echinacea Cheyenne Spirit (2013), Petunia Tidal Wave Red Velour (2015), Petunia Wave Carmine Velour (2018) and Echinacea Sombrero Baja Burgundy (2019). Many of these varieties have also earned other industry

awards.

In addition, Ping's co-invention of the petunia green corolla allele gene has been broadly used in petunia breeding across the industry, resulting in the introduction of numerous unique colors of petunia associated with the gene.

"It is a great honor to receive this AAS Breeder's Cup. Thank you to the All-America Selections staff, Board of Directors, all the AAS Judges, my peers at PanAmerican and Ball and to the person who nominated me," said Ping. "Thank you very much for an incredible and memorable award ceremony! It is humbling to join the rest of the recipients of this noteworthy award." **GT**