

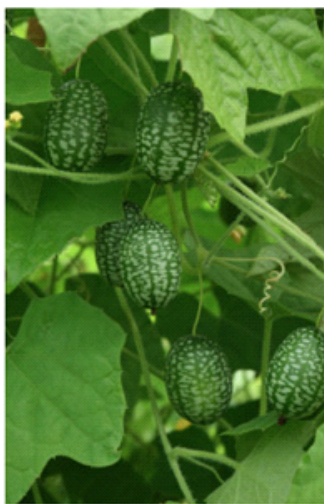
GROWERTALKS

Cover Story

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Feast Your Eyes on These

Jennifer Polanz & Jennifer Zurko



Gardeners have been gobbling up veggie starts the past two years and their success depends partially on the toughness of the varieties they (and by they, we mean you) choose. If you can provide them the latest in top-notch genetics designed to improve disease resistance, give them even better flavor and texture and, best of all, provide lots of yield, then it reduces the chances of failure greatly.

With that in mind, we give you some of the newest introductions from our industry's breeders, either seen at this year's California Summer Trials or provided this fall for 2022 sales.

Herbs

Basil Everleaf Thai Towers (PanAmerican Seed)

PanAmerican's HandPicked Vegetables program saw quite a few new tomatoes and peppers this year, but there was one other crop that stood out. Basil Everleaf Thai Towers is the seventh basil variety introduced in the HandPicked program and this one has more of a spicy, licorice flavor compared to a traditional basil type. Its appearance is also a bit different with its slender leaves and purple stems.

Tomatoes

The Plus Series (Vegetables By Bayer)

The Plus series includes four varieties that are improvements from their popular originals:

- Better Boy Plus features more flavor with a higher brix and better disease resistance. Weighing in at around a pound, these tomatoes are great for canning, slicing and cooking into sauces.
- Big Beef Plus has improved color and spotted wilt resistance over the original Big Beef. Great for cutting up into

salads.

- Lemon Boy Plus has a yellow color and sweet, tangy flavor with improved disease resistance and less radial cracking.
- Celebrity Plus has added resistance to Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus with better shape and size from the original.

Patio Delight (Burpee Home Gardens)

Because of the size of this plant, those at Burpee Home Gardens recommend it for containers only. A saladette-type of determinate tomato, it ripens early with a rich, sweet flavor. It has an upright, compact habit, making it perfect for limited space situations like a deck or patio.



Multiple Varieties from HandPicked Vegetables (PanAmerican Seed)

This year, PanAmerican introduced four new tomato varieties:

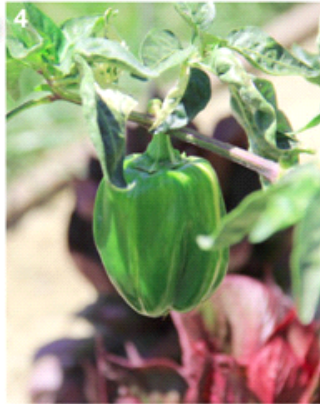
- Bellatrix is a late, blight-resistant, determinate Roma tomato that ripens quickly and provides a large harvest
- Marzito, what they're calling a "mini-Marzano" type of tomato, is an indeterminate grape tomato that's good for both snacking and sauces
- Loki, a leaf mold-resistant slicing tomato that's ideal

for areas that have high humidity; indeterminate with a high yield

- Dark Star, an F1 beefsteak that's got a purple heirloom look and taste with modern hybrid vigor and disease resistance

RuBee Collection (Sakata)

The new RuBee Tomato collection includes four indeterminate slicers: Dawn, Goddess, Plus (pictured) and Prize. At CAST, the folks at Sakata said that the big focus is on flavor for these varieties. They're all mid-compact to compact plants that are either very early or early to fruit.



Peppers

Demon Red Hot Pepper (Burpee Home Gardens)

This ornamental pepper looks great in containers and hanging baskets, and also produces edible hot peppers. Its Scoville rating of 173,500 is similar to a habanero and the bright red fruit covers the plant in a show of red.

Multiple Varieties from HandPicked Vegetables (PanAmerican Seed)

There were five new peppers from the HandPicked collection showcased at CAST, including three sweet seedless peppers in the Peppi series, a new hanging basket option and a unique striped pepper:

- Peppi Cornissimo, a large red grilling type
- Peppi Yellow and Peppi Red, which are snack-size peppers
- Pot-a-Peño is a hanging basket/container type with stems that cascade as the fruit forms; the peppers have a mild taste and matures from green to red

- Candy Cane Chocolate Cherry is a striped sweet pepper in which the stripes remain throughout every stage of maturity, from green to a deep chocolate color

Pepper Delite (Sakata)

Delite is a snacking-type pepper with medium-sized fruit in Red, Orange and Yellow. All of them are very flavorful and work great for patio containers.

Cucumber

Mexican Sour Gherkin (Burpee Home Gardens)

Talk about fun, it looks like a miniature watermelon, but tastes like a cucumber with a tangy citrus vibe. The vines grow 4- to 7-ft. long, so make sure customers know to trellis these. Great for snacking on, in salads or as garnishes.

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