

## 2016 Compiled and averaged Variety Trial results with Diana Alfuth's comments

Carrot				
Number of Trial results submitted: 16	Danvers	Forto	Sweetness III	Tendersweet
Germination: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.6
1 <sup>st</sup> harvest yield of carrots per variety 1=excellent, 2=adequate, 3=poor	1.7	1.7	2.1	1.7
2 <sup>nd</sup> harvest yield of carrots per variety 1=excellent, 2=adequate, 3=poor	1.5	1.8	1.5	1.5
Average length of carrot roots per variety in inches	5	6.3	5.9	6.6
Tops-density 1=strong, 2=good, 3=weak	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.5
Surface of root 1=smooth, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.6
Number of forked carrots 1=little to none, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.5
Flavor 1 = sweet, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.8	1.33	1.85	1.46
Diseases: 1= none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infection	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Insects: 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infestation	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
<b>Would you grow this variety again?</b>	<b>14 yes 3 no</b>	<b>9 yes 4 no</b>	<b>7 yes 5 no</b>	<b>9 yes 3 no</b>
<b>Please rank from 1 = best to 4 = least</b>	<b>3 (2.5)</b>	<b>4 (2.8)</b>	<b>1 (2.3)</b>	<b>2 (2.4)</b>

Growers had good success growing all four varieties. Germination and harvest was similar among all varieties. Many growers experienced problems due to heavy rainfalls, resulting in washouts or heavy crusting affecting germination. Some Carrot weevils, which feed on the carrots near the tops of the roots, were reported on all varieties, though they were not a major problem. Some root cracking was also reported, probably due to the heavy rainfalls experienced during root development.

Tendersweet had slightly less forking than the other three varieties. Tendersweet also had the overall longest size carrots. The vast majority of growers would grow all of the varieties again! In the end, the highest ranked variety was Sweetness III, followed closely by Tendersweet, Danvers, and Forto.

Carrots can grow very differently in different types of soil. They will be longer in sandier soils than they will be in clay. Those grown in clay soil may also have more forking. Because carrots germinate slowly, and seedlings are very small, planting with a companion plant, such as radish, helps to see rows. Care should be given when thinning to avoid disturbing desired plants. Thin plants to proper spacing or size and production will suffer. If tops "broom" (get lots of feathery foliage) or roots become hairy, the plants may have become infected with Aster Yellows and flavor will be off and bitter.

<b>Eggplant, Colored</b>				
Number of Trial Results Submitted: 7	<b>Casper</b>	<b>Diamond</b>	<b>Pintung Long</b>	<b>Thai Green</b>
Germination: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	2	1.1	1.8	2
Yearly Yield : 1 = heavy , 2 = acceptable , 3 = not acceptable	2.5	1.6	2.1	2.4
Did you use support for plants yes/no	1 yes 5 no	1 yes 5 no	1 yes 5 no	1 yes 4 no
Raw Flavor: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1	1.2	1.3	1.7
Describe Raw Flavor		Strong, sweet	Sweet small seeds	sweet
Cooked Flavor: 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1.3	1.3	1.6	2
Describe Cooked Flavor		Mild to strong		sweet
Diseases: 1= none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infection	1	1	1	1
Insects: 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infestation	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
<b>Would you grow this variety again?</b>	<b>2 yes</b> <b>3 no</b>	<b>3 yes</b> <b>3 no</b>	<b>3 yes</b> <b>3 no</b>	<b>1 yes</b> <b>5 no</b>
<b>Please rank from 1 = best to 4 = least</b>	<b>4 (3.6)</b>	<b>1 (1.4)</b>	<b>2 (2.4)</b>	<b>3 (2.8)</b>

There were some spotty germination issues, which mostly affected Casper and Thai Green. Germination of Diamond was most reliable. All varieties had similar problems with grasshoppers and Japanese beetles as pests, but none had any disease problems. Flavor of Thai Green was ranked slightly lower than the others, both raw and cooked.

Diamond was the favorite and was significantly higher ranked than the others. Casper was ranked lowest, possibly because of low yield and average flavor. Pintung Long and Thai Green were ranked quite evenly in the middle, though more growers said they would grow Pintung Long again while only one would grow Thai Green.

Eggplant is closely related to tomatoes and potatoes, and can harbor the same diseases, so should be rotated accordingly.

<b>Kohlrabi</b>				
Number of Trial Results submitted: 12	<b>Early White Vienna</b>	<b>Grand Duke</b>	<b>Kossack</b>	<b>Winner</b>
Germination: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1.4	1.8	1.3	1.3
Yearly Yield : 1 = heavy , 2 = acceptable , 3 = not acceptable	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5
Size of bulbs 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.8
Was the largest bulb woody/bitter? Yes/No	4 yes 5 no	3 yes 6 no	1 yes 8 no	1 yes 8 no
Raw Flavor: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.5	1.8	1.1	1.1
Describe Raw Flavor	bland, ok, sweet side	bland, sweet, very good, mild radish	bland, crisp , Sweet-favorite,	bland, mild, good, almost as sweet as Kossack,
Cooked Flavor: 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1	1	1	1
Describe Cooked Flavor	bland	Bland, sweet	Bland, juicy and sweet	Bland, mild
Diseases: 1= none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infection	1	1	1	1
Insects: 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infestation	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
<b>Would you grow this variety again?</b>	<b>3 yes 5 no</b>	<b>4 yes 4 no</b>	<b>6 yes 2 no</b>	<b>6 yes 3 no</b>
<b>Please rank from 1 = best to 4 = least</b>	<b>4 (3.28)</b>	<b>3 (2.71)</b>	<b>1 (1.5)</b>	<b>2 (2.14)</b>

Germination and yield were similar with all varieties. Winner and Grand Duke had the largest roots, but not by much. As roots got larger, Winner and Kossack were less likely to get “woody” or bitter. Winner and Kossack also had the best flavor, being described more often as sweet. One of the varieties had any disease problems, but all suffered some cabbage looper problems.

Kossack was ranked the highest and would be grown again by the majority of growers. Winner was in second place, with Early White Vienna and Grand Duke tied for third.

The rainy summer didn’t appear to affect the Kohlrabi. Growing these plants under a row cover would protect them from Cabbage Looper and Imported Cabbageworm, both of which are common pests of plants in this family.

2016

10 growers sent in results Crop failures brought trial results down to 5 growers.

Lettuce, Heading				
Number of Trial results submitted: 10 but crop failures brought trial results down to 5 growers.	Crisphead	Great Lakes 118	Red Iceberg	Summertime Iceberg
Germination: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1.4	1.6	2	2.8
Yearly Yield : 1 = heavy , 2 = acceptable , 3 = not acceptable	1.6	1.8	2	2.7
Bolt (rank 1=first to bolt, 2=second to bolt, 3=third to bolt, 4=last to bolt)	2	1.6	3.5	2.5
Raw Flavor: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.4	1.2	1.6	1.3
Describe Raw Flavor	Mild, butter sweet, sweet	Great, sweet, sweet	Buttery sweet, sweet	sweet
Cooked Flavor: 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	2	2	2	2
Describe Cooked Flavor	mild	mild	mild	mild
Diseases: 1= none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infection	1	1	1	1
Insects: 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infestation	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3
<b>Would you grow this variety again?</b>	<b>4 yes</b> <b>1 no</b>	<b>4 yes</b> <b>1 no</b>	<b>3 yes</b> <b>1 no</b>	<b>2 yes</b> <b>2 no</b>
<b>Please rank from 1 = best to 4 = least</b>	<b>2 (2)</b>	<b>3 (2.2)</b>	<b>1 (1.5)</b>	<b>4 (4)</b>

The heavy rains this season caused some washouts for those who direct seeded outside. Summertime Iceberg had especially poor germination, as well as lower yield. Red Iceberg was the last to bolt and overall had a good yield. All four varieties had good flavor. No diseases were reported, but one gardener had problems with slugs on all varieties.

The winner was Red Iceberg, while the clear loser was Summertime Iceberg. Great Lakes 118 and Crisphead were in the middle, and most growers would grow them again.

Head lettuce is sometimes difficult to grow in our area because the hot weather causes bolting before heads form. Better success is had when seeds are started indoors and plants are transplanted as soon as the soil can be worked in spring. Slugs can be a problem with lettuce, so controls and prevention are important. Remove hiding places around these plants, such as heavy mulch, and use traps or baits to reduce numbers. Avoid overwatering.

<b>Muskmelon</b>				
	<b>Ambrosia</b>	<b>Goddess Hybrid</b>	<b>Minnesota Midget</b>	<b>Pride of Wisconsin</b>
Number of Trial results Submitted: 12 but crop failures brought trial results down to 4 growers.				
Germination: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1	1.7	1.7	1.8
Fruit Size 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.3	1	1.5	1.3
Did you trellis plants? Yes/no	1 yes 3 no	1 yes 2 no	2 yes 2 no	2 yes 2 no
Yearly Yield : 1 = heavy , 2 = acceptable , 3 = not acceptable	1	1	1.7	2
First harvest date	8/14,8/25,8/28,8/17	8/14,8/22,8/30	8/9,8/15,8/25,8/22	8/26,8/20,9/12,8/22
Vine size: 1=overrunning, 2=acceptable, 3=small	1.5	2	1.8	1.7
Flavor of Fresh Fruit: 1=outstanding, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.5	2	1.8	1.7
Texture: 1=excellent, 2=good, 3=poor	1.5	1.7	2	1.8
Did you preserve muskmelon? Yes/no	1 yes 3 no	3 no	3 no	4 no
Flavor of Preserved Fruit: 1=Outstanding, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	2			
Diseases: 1= none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infection	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.8
Insects: 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infestation	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
<b>Would you grow this variety again?</b>	<b>4 yes</b>	<b>3 yes</b>	<b>2 yes 2 no</b>	<b>2 yes 1 no</b>
<b>Please rank from 1 = best to 4 = least</b>	<b>1 (1.75)</b>	<b>2 (2.25)</b>	<b>4 (3.5)</b>	<b>3 (2.5)</b>

Muskmelons can be tricky to grow, and this trial proved that. Two-thirds of the growers had crop failure, either due to poor germination, poor pollination, or other problems. Powdery mildew affected all four varieties, and it was not surprising given the high rainfall and humidity we had during the growing season. Fruit rot also was a factor, and the rainy growing season may have been a factor.

Ambrosia came in first, and had the best germination, good fruit size and yield. All of the growers said they would grow it again. Minnesota Midget came in last, with Goddess Hybrid and Pride of Wisconsin pretty much tied in the middle. Vine size varied and may have been affected by the high rainfall.

Powdery mildew is often a problem on vine crops. Mild cases simply cause some whitish leaves, while advanced cases can kill the plants. Powdery mildew fungus likes warm, humid conditions. Growers who have had problems with it in the past should consider preventative controls, which must be applied BEFORE symptoms appear.

<b>Peas, Edible Pod</b>				
Number of Trial Results submitted: 10	<b>Cascadia</b>	<b>Sugar Lace II</b>	<b>Sugar Snap</b>	<b>Sugar Sprint</b>
Germination: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1.3	1.6	1.2	1.6
Did the plants rebloom?	8 yes 1 no	4 yes 3 no	6 yes 3 no	4 yes 4 no
Yearly Yield : 1 = heavy , 2 = acceptable , 3 = not acceptable	1.4	1.9	1.5	1.3
Raw Flavor: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3
Describe Raw Flavor	sweet, crisp, good	Sweet, slightly bitter	Crunchy more fiber, not as sweet as Cascadia but good,mild, crisp,	Less sweet, less fiber, ok –a little bitter
Cooked Flavor: 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1	1.2	1	1.3
Describe Cooked Flavor	Less dense, sweet, delicious,	Delicious	Sweeter,delicious	Thickest, delicious
Did you freeze/can?	2 yes 7 no	1 yes 6 no	2 yes 4 no	2 yes 7 no
Quality/flavor of frozen/canned peas 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1	1	1	1
Diseases: 1= none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infection	1	1	1	1
Insects: 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infestation	1	1	1	1
<b>Would you grow this variety again?</b>	<b>8 yes 1 no</b>	<b>5 yes 3 no</b>	<b>7 yes 1 no</b>	<b>4 yes 4 no</b>
<b>Please rank from 1 = best to 4 = least</b>	<b>2 (2.2)</b>	<b>3 (2.6)</b>	<b>1 (1.7)</b>	<b>3 (2.6)</b>

Peas are a classic garden plant and overall, growers had good success. Germination was similar with all 4 varieties. There were no disease or insect problems with any of the varieties, although wildlife, especially rabbits and deer, did cause some problems. Cascadia re-bloomed the most, while Sugar Sprint re-bloomed the least.

Sugar Snap slightly edged out Cascadia for the top spot, but Cascadia was ranked very high. Both had high yields and sweet, good flavor, both raw and cooked. Cascadia produced longer into the heat of summer than Sugar Snap, and was reported to have somewhat taller vines, making harvesting easier. Sugar Sprint and Sugar Lace II tied for the bottom spots. Sugar Sprint was the earliest bloomer, but flavor ranked slightly lower than the others, and it did not re-bloom as well.

Because peas don't do well in summer heat, it's important to plant them as early as possible in spring. While they germinate faster in warmer soil, they can tolerate frosts and even snow. Replanting in July provides for a bountiful fall harvest!

2016 Herb Trial –

<b>Parsley, Flat Leafed</b>				
Number of Trial Results Submitted: 12	<b>Flat Leaf/Single Italian</b>	<b>Fedelio</b>	<b>Giante D'Italia</b>	<b>Titan</b>
Germination: 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3 = not acceptable	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.8
Yearly Yield : 1 = heavy , 2 = acceptable , 3 = not acceptable	1.6	1.7	1.4	1.6
Flavor 1=good, 2=acceptable, 3=not acceptable	1.2	1.7	1.6	1.5
Describe flavor	Mellow, flavorful, mild, earthy,Slightly floral, strong & juicy, Excellent and first available.	Bitter, mild,sweet, tough, leathery, a little citrusy , parsley	Nice strong parsley, mild, tarry, strong, pure parsley taste, celery-like	Spicy, bland, mild.sweet, soapy, strong scent – less flavor,blah
Did you freeze/dry parsley?	4 yes 6 no	3 yes 6 no	4 yes 7 no	4 yes 6 no
Quality/flavor of frozen/dried parsley 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.2
Diseases: 1= none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infection	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1
Insects: 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infestation	1	1	1	1
<b>Would you purchase this variety again?</b>	<b>5 yes 3 no</b>	<b>4 yes 4 no</b>	<b>6 yes 2 no</b>	<b>6 yes 2 no</b>
<b>Please rank from 1 = best to 4 = least</b>	<b>3 (2.6)</b>	<b>4 (2.8)</b>	<b>1 (1.7)</b>	<b>2 (2.3)</b>

Parsley is one of the most common herbs grown in home gardens, and it's used in a variety of ways. As with many herbs, everyone's tastes are different. Some growers had germination problems, especially with Titan. There were no real disease or insect problems, except a few growers had swallowtail caterpillars but damage was minimal.

The top-ranked variety was Giant D'Italia. It was described as having a pure parsley taste. But, all varieties were well-liked. Growers commented that they had a hard time comparing taste. Titan was noted to be a very attractive green plant that would be useful as an ornamental for butterflies.

As with most herbs, growing conditions can greatly affect flavor. Flavors can be more concentrated when grown in dry or infertile conditions and more mild when plants are lush and grow faster.

**2016 Flower Trial:**

<b>Cosmos, Mixed</b>				
	<b>Bright Lights</b>	<b>Psyche</b>	<b>Sensation</b>	<b>Seashell</b>
Number of Trial Results Submitted: 23				
Germination: 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.6
Plant Size: height/width 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4
Bloom Size 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.2
Number of blooms 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.4	1.6	1.4	1.5
Length of bloom time 1 = good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.4
Cut flower 1= good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6
Rebound after cutting/deadheading 1= good, 2 = acceptable, 3 = poor	1.4	1.7	1.7	1.6
Attractive to pollinators? Flower shape, size and color can affect attraction. Rank in order of most pollinators to least pollinators from 1=best to 4=least	2.6	2	2	2.1
Diseases: 1= none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infection	1.1	1	1.1	1
Insects: 1 = none, 2 = some, 3 = heavy infestation	1	1	1	1
<b>Would you purchase this variety again? Yes/no</b>	<b>7 yes 4 no</b>	<b>9 yes 4 no</b>	<b>10 yes 4 no</b>	<b>12 yes 1 no</b>
<b>Please rank from 1 = best to 4 = least</b>	<b>4 (2.9)</b>	<b>3 (2.5)</b>	<b>1 (2.4)</b>	<b>2 (2.46)</b>

Cosmos are generally easy-to-grow annuals. As with any flower, personal taste plays a role in how they are ranked! Overall, a few growers had germination problems, but no one variety was worse than others. Growers were happy with plant size and bloom size. Seashell appeared to have the most blooms and good bloom size, yet ranked lower for attracting pollinators! There were no disease or insect problems for any of the varieties.

All varieties were ranked similarly, with Sensation getting a slight edge, and Bright Lights, coming in slightly last. Bright Lights had somewhat different, daintier looking foliage, but bloomed early.

Because cosmos grows quickly and quite tall, it may need staking, especially in windy sites. Too much water or fertilizer may cause faster, weaker growth, making the problem worse. Plants grow strongest in full, all-day sun.