

HighLights

Trial Gardens and HortResearch at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station

Vol. 1 No. 5

July 21, 2014

Published by Dr. Gene Blythe

Colorful foliage adds unique colors and eye-catching effects to the garden. Recent and upcoming introductions in our Trial Gardens join the selection of plants for the summer landscape (or even just a patio container).

This year, AgriStarts sent us several *Colocasia* (elephant ear) varieties for evaluation. Among them, the chartreuse-leaved 'Maui Gold' (shown below) has been an attractive green companion to the darker-leaved varieties. However, on a recent clear, sunny (and hot!) afternoon, 'Maui Gold' stood out among the other varieties when backlit by the sun, causing the leaves to radiate shades of fluorescent green and gold. Be sure to visit the Trial Gardens and see all the *Colocasia* varieties growing under full-sun conditions.



Below are the dark-leaved ornamental pepper varieties 'Black Olive' and 'Black Pearl' [both All-America Selections (AAS) winners]. These two varieties may look somewhat alike now,



but as the summer moves on, colorful red "olives" and "pearls" will stand out against the dark foliage. The 2014 AAS winner 'NuMex Easter' is in the foreground with multi-colored chili peppers.



The sun coleus variety 'Marquee Blonde Bombshell' (above), from Burpee Home Gardens, is compact and self-branching, with foliage color that has remained strong and vibrant.



For our part-shade trials, Proven Winners sent us plants of *Begonia Pegasus*™ ('Gryphon') (above). Leaves are green and silver on top with red undersides, along with red petioles. Plants have been easy to grow and seem to like our warm days.

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