

HighLights

Trial Gardens and HortResearch at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station

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The hot days of summer have arrived, bringing an end to the flowering season for spring crops, ushering in the peak season for heat-loving crops, and proving the durability of new crops under heat and humidity in the Trial Gardens in Poplarville.



Blanket flower (*Gaillardia*), coneflower (*Echinacea*), vinca, zinnia, and ornamental peppers mark the start of the summer flowering season in the All-America Selections Display Garden (above).



Garden geraniums typically give up by the end of spring in our trials, but an exception this year has been *Pelargonium* 'Timeless Fire' (left), an upcoming, heat-tolerant introduction from Proven Winners. Foliage on plants grown in full sun looks healthy and flowering continues in both our in-ground and container trials.



Among the few petunias in our spring trials still providing a colorful display on the Fourth of July was 'Opera Supreme Red' (above), a trailing petunia from American Takii. ['Opera Supreme Morn' (not pictured), a 2007 AAS Winner, has performed well in past years.]

Several varieties in the Bounce series and Big Bounce series of impatiens from Selecta are currently being tested under full sun conditions in the Trial Gardens. Ball Horticultural will be introducing new varieties in 2015. These hybrid, cutting-grown impatiens have been developed to be resistant to impatiens downy mildew, useful in both shade and sun, and able to bounce back after wilting. Visit our Trial Gardens to see how these varieties perform as the summer season progresses.



On the left, Impatiens 'Big Bounce Violet' has wilted in full sun on an early July day with temperatures in the low 90s. Plants are watered with drip irrigation.



On the left are the same plants of Impatiens 'Big Bounce Violet' the very next morning after "bouncing back" from wilting on the previous day.

Begonia 'Santa Cruz Sunset', a seed-grown crop from Benary, has come into flower in our container trials. From past experience, we find it best to grow this begonia in containers (baskets also work well) with potting soil under light shade. In our area, full sun, in-ground conditions do not give good growth.

