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2006 Home Demonstration Gardens

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Abstract
Home demonstration gardens were located at nine sites across the state. The objective was to grow, display, and compare a wide variety of vegetables and flowers. Some of the themes for the 2006 garden included a plethora of peppers, unusual green melons, geraniums, ornamental pigweed, and a food guide pyramid garden.

Disciplines
Agricultural Science | Agriculture | Horticulture

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Introduction

Home demonstration gardens were located at nine sites across the state. The objective was to grow, display, and compare a wide variety of vegetables and flowers. Some of the themes for the 2006 garden included a plethora of peppers, unusual green melons, geraniums, ornamental pigweed, and a food guide pyramid garden.

Materials and Methods

Most seedlings were grown in the ISU Horticulture greenhouses in Ames, IA. The transplants were transported and planted at research farms by the end of May. A few plants for the food guide pyramid garden (beets, carrots, beans, spinach, etc.) were directly seeded at each garden.

Limited fertilizer and pesticides were used. Plants were watered at planting and then as needed throughout the growing season. The amount of water applied at each garden varied considerably due to weather conditions.

Results and Discussion

In general, all peppers, geranium, amaranth, and plants for the food guide pyramid garden performed beautifully at all research farms. Forty cultivars of peppers were grown at each farm with at least nine cultivars from each of the following groups: bell, sweet, hot, and ornamental peppers. Observational data on peppers is presented in Table 1.

No differences were observed in the geranium series of cultivars (Elite, Multi-bloom, Orbit, Maverick, Ringo 200, Ripple, Black Velvet, and Pinto). All grew and bloomed well throughout the growing season, often without deadheading to encourage repeat blooms.

The performance of the unusual green melons (Boule d'Or, Passport, Arava, Amy, Savor, Sugar Nut, and Honey Orange) was not consistent. Some cultivars performed well at some farms while dying prematurely at other farms.

Twelve accessions of ornamental pigweeds or amaranth were donated from the North Central Regional Plant Introduction Station in Ames, IA. Most of the accessions grew and bloomed well at all farms. At a few of the farms, number 603899 (Splendens Perfecta type) and 553073 (Love lies Bleeding type) did not survive. Accessions 566897 (Kerala Red type), 604461 (Elephant Head type), and the two ISU introductions (Pillar Orange and Pillar Red) were popular with field day attendees.

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Table 1. Comparison of forty pepper cultivars grown at nine ISU Research and Demonstration Farms from May to August 2006.

Type	Cultivar	Comments
Bell	Blushing Beauty	Green to white to red; early
	Fat N Sassy	Green to red; large bell
	Golden Bell	Green to gold; blocky bell
	Gourmet	Green to orange; blocky bell
	Islander	Green to lavender to red; early
	New Ace	Green to red; elongated bell
	Orange Sun	Green to orange; blocky bell
	Purple Beauty	Green to purple to red; early
	Super Heavyweight	Green to gold; large bell
Sweet	Antohi Romanian	Green to red; large tapered pepper
	Apple	Green to red; triangular pepper
	Banana Bill	Green to yellow to red; tapered pepper
	Biscayne	Green to yellow/green; tapered pepper
	Carmen	Green to red; large tapered pepper
	Cherry Pick	Green to red; small round pepper
	Round of Hungary	Green to red; large rounded pepper; late
	Sweet Hungarian	Green to yellow to red; tapered pepper
	Sweet Spot	Green to yellow to red; tapered pepper
Hot	Balloon	Green to orange; heirloom; unusual shape; late
	Big Chili II	Green to red; Anaheim pepper
	Bulgarian Carrot	Green to orange; small heirloom pepper; early
	Caribbean Red	Green to red; Habanero pepper; late
	Hot Lemon	Green to yellow; small, narrow pepper
	Jalapeno M	Green to reddish purple; jalapeno type
	Long Slim Cayenne	Green to red; large, tapered pepper; early
	Mariachi	Green to red; large, triangular pepper; early
	Mucho Nacho	Green to reddish purple; jalapeno type
	Pablano/Ancho	Green to red; triangular pepper
	Senorita	Green to reddish purple; jalapeno type
	Thai Hot	Green to red; small, narrow pepper; late
Ornamental	Black Pearl	Green to purple to red; purple foliage; early
	Chilly Chilli	Green to yellow, orange, and red; compact habit; early
	Fish	Green to white to red; heirloom, variegated leaves; few plants survived
	Marbles	Green to white, yellow, orange, or red; small, round peppers; compact habit
	Nippon Taka	Green to red; long, narrow peppers
	Numex Twilight	Green to purple, yellow, and red
	Pretty in Purple	Green to purple to red; purple and green leaves
	Tangerine Dream	Green to orange; small tapered peppers