

Fleuroselect announces Gold Medal winners

FLEUROSELECT, the international organisation for the ornamental plants industry, has awarded two Gold Medals this year. The judges at the fifteen European trial grounds awarded the honours to the striking sweet pea, *Lathyrus odoratus* 'Villa Roma Scarlet' from Hem Zaden in the Netherlands, and the sizzling, orange-red *Zinnia marylandica* 'Double Zahara Fire' from PanAmerican Seed in the U.S.A. Since its establishment in 1970, Fleuroselect has brought the industry over 140 outstanding Gold Medal winning varieties from truly innovative breeders.



'Villa Roma Scarlet'
'Villa Roma Scarlet' is the first *Lathyrus odoratus* to win the Gold Medal, impressing the twenty Fleuroselect European judges with its innovative, striking, bright colour, its overall attractiveness and its excellent garden performance. 'Villa Roma Scarlet' is an excellent addition to the current range of compact

Lathyrus odoratus. The variety is suitable for both professional and consumer use for container gardening, hanging baskets and for full-ground direct sowing. For plug production, the variety can be sown as early as January, and for direct sowing in the garden from April/May. The variety requires no staking or trellis work and flowers profusely and efficiently from July to September. With the advent of modern container gardening, compact sweet peas have risen to new heights of popularity. 'Villa Roma Scarlet' blossoms earlier than existing varieties, a real bonus for the professional *Lathyrus* grower. Containers of sweet peas are instant gardens and a striking container of these scarlet beauties will provide garden centres with high added retail value. Expert consumers will be able to purchase seed through the amateur packet seed market for home-sown success, while regular gardening enthusiasts can choose ready-made plugs or finished plants for home-grown gratification.

'Double Zahara Fire'
Zinnia marylandica
'Double Zahara Fire' is the first disease-tolerant zinnia. This Gold Medal winner has large, truly perfect, fully double flowers and is particularly disease tolerant versus *Zinnia elegans*.

The variety has been developed for use in mass landscape plantings in high light and warm temperate climates. It is a must for borders and containers and will be available in 10.5 cm pots for consumer sales. One really must see this flower in the field to appreciate the colour of this variety. The effect of outdoor light and the reflections in the leaves of the flower add to a visual attractiveness and draw the attention of everyone. PanAmerican Seed has added a lot of professional advantages, like excellent germination, easy crop scheduling and compactness, which makes it a perfect, modern annual. Stunning beds of disease-tolerant plants flower from late spring to first frosts, making low-maintenance borders. The unique colour, it cannot be emphasized enough and large, truly double flowers will certainly draw consumers. This drought-resistant and heat-loving flower ensures a superb garden show all summer long.



Construction Floriade well underway

GARDENERS OF FLORIAD 2012 have started to plant out the 80,000 perennials that will cover the park. The sixth edition of this world horticulture expo will be held from April to mid-October 2012 in Venlo, the Netherlands. The contours of the five themes: relax & heal, green engine, education & innovation, environment and world show case, have become visible in the landscape. Roads, footpaths and ponds have already been constructed.

Floriade is held every decade in the Netherlands. The 2012 edition will, however, be a completely different exposition than previous events. The 66 hectares are wholly aimed at experiencing nature. Using the senses of sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell, visitors can experience first hand the influence horticulture has on the quality of their daily lives. Over two million visitors are expected from all over the world.

So far, reservations have been made by 16 countries. In March, Spain, Hungary and Kenya were added and ten more countries are expected. Besides horticultural and other companies, public and semi-public bodies will also be present. By the end of this year, the exhibitors will start to lay out their contributions. The official opening will take place on 5 April 2012.