

VARIETY TESTS WITH GLADIOLUS - 1965

by

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During the spring and summer of 1965 variety tests were continued with gladiolus at this station. The primary purpose of the tests was to have material available for study and for use in making crosses as part of the gladiolus breeding program. Since the varieties were also being tested for "commercial adaptation", notes were taken on color, blooming season, spike length, and other important commercial characteristics.

We found that approximately 80 percent of the new varieties tested would have to be eliminated because of poor color. Most of the red varieties were too dark for commercial use, and many others had unusual colors or markings that made them unsuitable for this purpose.

Another 15 percent was eliminated because of defects such as poor floret placement, failure to open properly, or unusual susceptibility to diseases. The remaining 5 percent of the varieties was good enough to be kept for further evaluation. However, as a usual thing, not more than one or two new varieties out of several hundred tested will eventually be recommended to growers for trial. Even the best of the varieties that are now used by growers fail to meet the standards that are set for a really good commercial gladiolus. It is for this reason that we started a breeding program three years ago and are now placing more emphasis on breeding than on testing new varieties. The possibility of developing adapted varieties by a planned breeding program is better than attempting to select such varieties from material produced by breeders in other areas.

The following table includes brief data on 126 varieties that were grown in tests at the Horticultural Crops Research Station in 1965. The first 70 have been tested by us for two or more years. This year's crop was from North Carolina-grown corms which were planted on February 12, 1965. The remainder of the varieties (Nos. 71-126) were from Holland-grown corms which were not received until the middle of March. They were planted on March 15. For this reason they cannot be compared directly with the first 70 varieties in the table.

The varieties that proved to be best adapted to commercial production in our area are marked with an asterisk (*). This does not mean that all of the others are "no good". Further tests may show that some are well adapted to certain growing and marketing conditions. Also, many of them are ideal varieties for the home gardener or for the florist who grows gladiolus for local sales.

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	throat			
Aristocrat	Rose red	6/7	46	Florets have velvety sheen.
Atlantic	Bright scarlet (light red with white streak)	6/14	44	About color of Valeria.
Beverly Ann*	Lavender	6/4	42	Very good spikes and color.
Blanca	White	5/30	40	Florets too widely spaced.
Bow Bells	White w cream throat	6/1	41	Same as White Friendship.
Cararra*	Creamy white	5/28	42	Large florets, open well.
Citation	Medium pink with cream throat	6/18	46	Vigorous, healthy variety but florets too widely spaced.
Coral Ace	Coral pink	6/7	40	Good placement. Unusual color.
Cosmopolite	Med. pink - purplish mark in throat	6/8	46	Not a commercial.
Crescendo	Pink with white markings	6/18	40	Poor placement of florets.
Dixie Jewel	Pink with cream throat	6/11	50	Large florets, long flower heads.
Dr. H. Verway	Bright scarlet	6/11	45	Unusual color. Not commercial.
Early Picardy	Salmon pink	6/1	46	Similar to Picardy.
Early Spring*	Light pink	6/5	40	Light color. Good placement.
Elan	Light salmon pink	6/7	48	Color too pale.
Fiat Lux	Greenish yellow	6/6	46	Not a good yellow. Small florets.
Florida Pink	Med. pink	6/7	46	Vigorous, straight, good placement.
Flower Song*	Yellow	6/6	44	Good substance and placement.
Gail	Lilac with dark throat feather, lavender	6/11	45	Opens well. Color rather poor.
Hopman's Glory*	Yellow	6/1	44	Standard.
Joli Coeur	Bright red	5/28	30	Too dark in color. Soft.
Jubilee	Creamy white edged with pink	6/9	42	Good placement. Opens well.
Kiss Waltz*	Bright red	5/30	39	Early, very large florets. Good color.
Lavender Lace*	Lavender	6/8	48	Good placement. Straight spikes.
Lavender	Deep Lavender	6/18	46	Too dark in color.
Masterpiece				
Leeuwenhorst*	Pink	6/11	46	Commercial.
Life Flame	Medium dark red	5/28	36	Too dark in color - soft.

Variety	Color	Date first bloomed	Av. Spike Height (in.)	Remarks
Liebesgruss	Pink with cream throat	6/7	44	Good placement.
Lilac	Medium Lavender	6/8	34	Florets too soft, cupped.
Perfection				
Maytime	Crimson with white throat	5/30	50	Tall, straight spikes, Novelty due to coloring. Opens well.
Milady	Lavender-yellow throat	5/28	46	Novelty.
Minaret	Light scarlet with white throat	6/8	43	Good placement. Opens well.
Mrs. Mable	White - sl. lavender	6/7	55	Florets open fast. Good placement.
Markwood*	throat			May rot.
New Europe	Light red	6/9	42	Very susceptible to corm rot.
New York	Dark red	6/18	45	Too dark in color.
Orange Gold*	Orange	6/16	50	Tall, vigorous.
Patriot	Bright red	6/10	51	Stems brittle - poor floret arrangement.
Pink	Pink with cream lip	6/14	46	Good placement. Straight spikes.
Sensation*				Opens well.
Oscar	Dark red	5/30	46	Too dark. Large, well placed florets.
Pink Supreme	Pink	5/28	40	Good placement. Early.
Prospector	Orange yellow with sl. darker throat	6/15	46	Color not good and clear. Tall spikes.
Rainier	White	6/8	36	Short spikes.
Red Radiance	Medium red	6/18	45	Doesn't open well. Too dark.
Red Tomato	Red with sl. cream throat	6/8	40	Soft florets, poor placement.
Rose Spire	Pink with cream throat	6/11	44	Crooks easily. Burns.
Rosita	Rose pink	6/3	48	Color not good.
Ruffled	Salmon pink with red	6/18	46	Vigorous, good placement.
Champion	throat.			
Sans Souci	Medium red	6/18	46	Too dark in color.
Sequea Dama*	White	6/9	45	Good placement and spacing.
Shirley Irene	Cream w. light violet throat and edges	6/13	44	Color poor for commercial.
Snow Princess	White	5/29	41	Other whites are better.
Sunny Boy	Yellow with red marking	6/18	42	Vigorous, opens slowly.
Spic & Span*	Pink	6/7	42	Standard.
Texas White	White (creamy white)	6/9	45	Florets soft. Does not open well.
The Rajah	Wine red	6/15	48	Too dark in color.
Top Brass	Yellow	7/5	44	Very late.
Traveler*	Rose pink	6/14	42	Calyx may rot at point of attachment in wet seasons. Flower spikes often short.
Tyrone	Lavender with cream in throat	6/18	48	Commercial type. Florets a little soft.
Valeria*	Light red	6/4	42	Standard red. Very susceptible to Fusarium.