

2016 Mississippi Medallion Plants



The Mississippi Medallion Program was established in 1996 by the Mississippi Nursery and Landscape Association (MNLA) to increase awareness of plant materials and to promote sales and production of ornamental plants in Mississippi. Compared to national campaigns such as All-America Selections and Perennial Plant of the Year, the Mississippi Medallion Program focuses on promoting plants that thrive in Mississippi's climate to benefit both consumers and the green industry.

The Mississippi Medallion Selection Committee has identified five plants as Mississippi Medallion recipients in 2016. In an attempt to have plants from each of the product classes commonly sold in Mississippi garden centers, the committee has selected one each of: a woody ornamental, an herbaceous annual or perennial, a vegetable, an herb, and a fruit.

This publication presents the winning 2016 Mississippi Medallion Plants and is part of a series of publications that promote awareness of these plants.

Drift® Series Roses

Rosa hybrid

Characteristic: flowering shrub

Drift is a series of landscape roses with a spreading habit. They grow to up to 3 feet tall and 4 feet across. They are insect- and disease-resistant and perform similarly to the Knock Out roses.

There are eight colors in the Drift series: Red, Pink, Apricot, Peach, White, Coral, Sweet, and Popcorn Drift. Any of the eight cultivars can be labeled and sold as Mississippi Medallion winners.



Drift roses

Serenita® Series Angelonia

Angelonia angustifolia

Characteristic: warm-season annual

Serenita Angelonia has a more compact growth habit compared to its bigger cousin, Serena. It has the same ease of production, with fewer to no plant growth regulators (PGRs) required. They grow to 1 foot by 1 foot. They are tough, low-maintenance plants in the landscape or in containers. They are heat-, drought-, deer-, and rabbit-resistant.

There are six colors in the Serenita series: Serenita Lavender Pink, Sky Blue, Pink, Purple, Raspberry, and White. Any of the six cultivars can be labeled and sold as Mississippi Medallion winners.



Serenita Angelonia. Photo by MSU Extension Service/Gary Bachman.

Cherokee Purple Tomato

Solanum lycopersicum 'Cherokee Purple'

Characteristic: vegetable

Heirloom vegetables are all the rage in retail sales right now, especially heirloom tomatoes! Cherokee Purple tomato is a pre-1890 cultivar that ripens in 80 days. It bears a large, dusky pinkish-purple fruit. The flavor is described as a nice balance between sweet, savory, and acid.

The story is that Cherokee Purple had been in a Tennessee family's garden for 100 years. The seeds were originally given to the family by the Cherokee. The seeds made their way into the Seed Savers Exchange in the early 1990s, and the rest is history!

Cherokee Purple receives lots of press and is widely known. Seeds of Change uses it as the image for its Save the Flavors program.

Rosemary

Rosmarinus officinalis

Characteristic: herb

Rosemary is a woody-stemmed herb that usually grows to about 3 feet tall. It has needle-like leaves and purple or pink flowers. Rosemary is a very tough plant, but it does require good drainage and air circulation.

There are numerous cultivars available, including upright and trailing selections, and they can be sheared into topiaries for specialty markets. It is hardy throughout most of the state, but in USDA Zone 7, it should be grown in a container so winter protection can be provided. Alternatively, more cold-tolerant cultivars like Alcade, Bendenen Blue, Goodwin Creek, Miss Jessup's Upright, and Russian River will likely survive the winter in the ground in northern Mississippi.

Any cultivar of rosemary can be labeled and sold as a Mississippi Medallion winner.



Cherokee Purple Tomato



Rosemary

Muscadine

Vitis rotundifolia syn. *Muscadinia rotundifolia*

Characteristics: fruit; full-sun perennial; heat-tolerant edible

For gardeners—Muscadines are one of the easiest grape species to grow because they tolerate Gulf Coast weather conditions like high humidity and rainfall. Muscadines are disease-resistant and have few pests overall, making them a great moderate-maintenance fruit crop.

The plants grow in a vining habit and can be extremely vigorous. Annual pruning is necessary to keep the rampant growth in check and also to help with regular fruit bearing.

Consistent soil moisture is important for plant vigor and productivity. Supplemental water should be applied as needed throughout the growing season. Fertilizer application should be minimal, as too much will lead to excess vegetative growth.

Many muscadine cultivars require cross-pollination, so at least two different cultivars are needed for fruit set. Muscadine cultivars come in self-fertile and female types. Self-fertile cultivars can produce fruit all on their own, but a female cultivar requires a pollinizer vine (self-fertile) nearby.

Fruit color ranges from dark purple to bronze. Muscadines were first domesticated in North Carolina but are native as far north as southern Maryland and as far west as southwest Oklahoma. Depending on the cultivar, fruit size, shape, and seediness can vary, and the taste is always an adventure as flavors can be very different among cultivars.

With muscadines, you get delicious fruit in the late summer (August and September), and some cultivars like 'Southern Home' have desirable ornamental foliage. In the summer months, the foliage is light to deep green, and in the fall, the leaves turn yellow and red.

A list of muscadine cultivars is available in MSU Extension Publication 2290 *Establishment and Production of Muscadine Grapes*. As long as the plant is well-maintained, muscadine vines have a long lifespan that can provide years of enjoyment.



Muscadines

For growers—Substrate pH 6.0–6.5. Propagate using softwood cuttings; cuttings taken in late spring or early summer from the current season's growth are typically most successful. The propagation medium should be well-drained and aerated, but it should hold adequate moisture so that cuttings do not dry out. Rooting is best in a light-textured soil or a good potting medium.

Use mist to apply moisture and maintain humidity. Frequent, short misting intervals are recommended for best results. Keep cuttings partially shaded, and make sure they have adequate ventilation. After rooting occurs, add a dilute, complete liquid fertilizer weekly. Transplant into pots when vine rooting is adequate.

Any muscadine cultivar can be labeled and sold as a Mississippi Medallion winner.



Muscadine vine. Photo by Steve Stringer, USDA-ARS.

The information given here is for educational purposes only. References to commercial products, trade names, or suppliers are made with the understanding that no endorsement is implied and that no discrimination against other products or suppliers is intended.

Publication 2996 (POD-12-19)

By **Geoffrey C. Denny**, PhD, Assistant Extension Professor, Plant and Soil Sciences; **Gary R. Bachman**, PhD, Extension/Research Professor, Coastal Research and Extension Center; **Shaun R. Broderick**, PhD, Assistant Research/Extension Professor, Truck Crops Experiment Station; and **Eric T. Stafne**, PhD, Extension/Research Professor, Coastal Research and Extension Center.

Copyright 2019 by Mississippi State University. All rights reserved. This publication may be copied and distributed without alteration for nonprofit educational purposes provided that credit is given to the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Produced by Agricultural Communications.

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination in university employment, programs, or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited. Questions about equal opportunity programs or compliance should be directed to the Office of Compliance and Integrity, 56 Morgan Avenue, P.O. 6044, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (662) 325-5839.

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. GARY B. JACKSON, Director

