

2026 New Introductions

Compiled by Ann Wetzel

Annuals

The new plant introduction trends for 2026 are heavily focused on sustainability, climate resilience, and native plants that support local ecosystems. The trends for 2026 new plant introductions among annuals center on performance, heat/drought tolerance, and pollinator support.

Container Salvia, Estella Purple (*Salvia splendens*) A stunning Salvia with upright, 1.5 – 2 ft tall spikes, deep grape-colored flower spikes displayed above green toothy foliage, the color is



unlike anything we've seen before! Plants have a neat, rounded habit and stay gorgeous all season! Tolerant of hot weather and pest-free, it is reliable and stunning in containers and garden beds. These are perfect for intense color from spring through fall. The long-lasting blooms are bumblebee and hummingbird favorites, full of nectar and pollen that attracts feeds and sustains them. Source: Seeds: Renee's Garden

Teddy Bear Sunflowers Sun Bear (*Helianthus annuus*) This stunning sunflower bursts into



bloom with a profusion of super double, 5-inch golden-orange flowers that have a plush texture like a favorite teddy bear. The straight and tall 5-7 foot stalks are covered with big, bright blooms from top to bottom. Sun Bear sunflowers are exceptionally long blooming and its sturdy flowers hold their color. A fun and cheerful addition to any garden, it's also great for cutting and highly sought after by birds, bees and pollinators. Source: Seeds Renee's Garden

Nicotiana Lime Green (*Nicotiana alata*) Lime Green Nicotiana offers fountains of trumpet-



shaped chartreuse flowers on softly draping stems that rise from a basal rosette of big spoon-shaped leaves. These tropical looking plants bloom hard in garden beds where their lovely color enhances other garden flowers. Like all tobacco relatives, deer resistant Lime Green can handle both heat and humidity. The glowing chartreuse blossoms really shine in the afternoon! Hummingbirds love these flowers and always seek them out. Source: Seeds Renee's Garden



Silver River™ Didelta carnosa Plant for hot, arid, sunny conditions, you can rely upon Silver River™ didelta to deliver a rock-solid performance with little maintenance needed. It offers striking color contrast and terrific texture in combination with other heat and drought tolerant plants. It's a great filler in hanging baskets, not as vigorous as licorice plant (Helichrysum sp.).

Whirligig Gaillardia (Gaillardia pulchella) Double Gaillardia



This easy-care cultivar of the native prairie flower blooms nonstop from late spring through fall, loves the sun and can take the heat. Plants grow 1½-2 feet tall, with straight stems and masses of globe- shaped blossoms in intricate patterns of rich red, mahogany and golden yellow. Enjoy abundant flowers all season that nurture pollinators, especially butterflies, plus you can count on a constant supply of colorful blooms for casual bouquets. At season's end, the

nutritious seed will feed songbirds. Source: seeds Renee's Garden



Candy hybrid begonias feature large double flowers in vibrant, bright colors set against dark chocolate foliage. Comes in 6 colors: Coral Pink, Inferno Lemon Yellow, Sunset, Vanilla Cream, Deep Yellow. All have a mounding habit, for full shade to part sun. Bloom time mid spring through summer. Plants are 10–14" in tall, 12–16" wide. Source: Syngenta Flowers, purchase plants at local nurseries.



Supertunia Vista petunias are very vigorous, with mounding habits that can reach up to 2 feet in height in the landscape and will trail over the edges of baskets and containers up to 4 feet by the end of the season. They have medium-sized flowers. Heat tolerant, self-cleaning, comes in 7 different colors.

Sources: Proven Winners plants.



Superbells Magic® Double Grapefruit double calibrachoa This dynamic, color-shifting calibrachoa opens lemon yellow, then takes on soft pink tones as it basks in the summer sun. The overall effect is like two pastel calibrachoas comingling in one captivating combination. Heat tolerant. Sources: Proven Winners plants.

The National Garden Bureau has named the Impatiens the annual of the year for 2026. Several Downy Mildew resistant varieties are available.

Beacon: Developed by PanAmerican Seed, this series offers vibrant colors (like Red, Violet, Salmon, Coral, Orange, White) and better resistance, making Impatiens walleriana viable again for shady spots.

The first series to look for is the Beacon® impatiens, developed by PanAmerican Seed. Years of painstaking breeding work in the Netherlands, followed by serious plant pathology work, has resulted in a series that is highly downy mildew resistant. There are six colors of Beacon: Bright Red, Violet Shades, Salmon, Coral, Orange and White. PanAm has also created two mixes from these colors. Beacon impatiens reach a mature height of 15 to 20 inches and spread 12 to 14 inches. PanAm recommends spacing in a mass planting at 8 to 10 inches apart. Plant Beacon when the chance of frost has passed in spring. If you want to start your plants from seed, a number of the larger mail-order catalogs are advertising Beacon seed.



Imara XDR: Another high-resistance series that provides reliable flowering, fighting off the disease that stops older varieties. Imara™ XDR series from Syngenta Flowers. Fun fact: Imara is a Swahili word meaning “resilience.” XDR stands for “extra disease resistance.”

There are nine colors in the Imara™ series, including Orange Star, Rose, White, Salmon Shades, Purple, Red, Orange, Pink and Red Star. They also have one mix. These impatiens are uniform in height and width at 10 to 12 inches. For best results, plant them after the last frost. Seeds are also available from the larger mail-order seed companies.

