

Mississippi Medallion Plants: 2009

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-American Selections and Perennial Plant of the Year, the Mississippi Medallion program focuses on plants adapted to the environment in Mississippi to benefit both consumers and the green industry. This publication gives an introduction to the 2009 Mississippi Medallion Plants and is part of a series of publications that promote awareness of these plants.

'Slim Jim' Eggplant

(*Solanum melongena* 'Slim Jim')

Characteristics: Full sun annual; purple foliage; produces edible fruits



For gardeners—'Slim Jim' eggplant is a purple-leaved cultivar, producing 2- to 4-ounce purple fruit in abundance. The leaves are typical for eggplant, up to 10 inches long and half as wide, with wavy margins. The purple leaves look great with gray, yellow, pink, and orange shades in the garden. Like other Mississippi Medallion-winning vegetables, Slim Jim can work well alone or in mixed containers. Consider teaming with calendula, 'Silver Falls' dichondra, dusty miller (*Artimesia*), sage, or oregano. 'Slim Jim' eggplant

should be grown in the warm part of the year; it does not tolerate frost.

For growers—'Slim Jim' seed is available domestically only from Pine Tree Garden Seeds (P.O. Box 300, New Gloucester, ME 04260; check with MNLA as well).

Grow in the same manner as tomatoes. Cover seed: $\frac{3}{8}$ inch; germination temperature: 76–80 °F; days to germinate: 5–7; fertilization: 100–200 ppm, N and K 50–100 ppm, P 1–2 times per week after first true leaf expands; 72-cell tray; finish time: 5–6 weeks. Scout seedlings for spider mites, flea beetles, and white flies. Treat if needed with pesticides approved for eggplant.

'Senorita Rosalita' Cleome

(*Cleome* 'Senorita Rosalita')

Characteristics: Sun annual; attracts butterflies



For gardeners—Also called spider flower. The common name is probably from the extra-long persistent pistil protruding horizontally from the inflorescence. The plant grows 40–48 inches tall. 'Senorita Rosalita' has lavish dark green foliage, which creates a backdrop for the pink flowers. 'Senorita Rosalita' is a thornless cultivar. It blooms from spring to frost. This cultivar does not reseed. Use it in the landscape or container to create height and vertical effect. New flowers are produced on the growing shoot terminals.



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Companion plants could include plants with silver foliage (such as 'Flambe' chrysocephalum) or yellow flowers (such as yellow-flowered daylilies).

For growers—Resistant to oedema (bumps or blisters on the undersides of lower and older leaves); pH 6.0–6.5; EC 0.6–0.9; growing temperature: 65–72 °F; holding temperature: 50–60 °F; fertilization: 100–150 ppm N; high light; dry to moderate; early spring through summer finish; pinch once, 2 weeks after liner planting; PGRs not necessary; finish time: 5–6 weeks for 4- to 5-inch containers and 10–12 weeks for 10- to 12-inch containers.

'Flambe' Chrysocephalum

(*Chrysocephalum apiculatum* 'Flambe')

Characteristics: Sun annual; gray-green or silver foliage



For gardeners—Numerous small, button-like orange or yellow flowers rise from gray-green ('Flambe Orange') or silver ('Flambe Yellow') foliage. The plant has a spreading habit. The stems and foliage are covered with silky hairs. Between the two cultivars, 'Flambe Orange' flowers better than 'Flambe Yellow' in the fall. It is an exceptionally adaptable plant and a great companion plant for any landscape or container.

For growers—pH 6.0–6.5; EC 0.6–0.9; growing temperature: 65–72 °F; holding temperature: 50–60 °F; fertilization: 150–200 ppm N; high light; moderate to moist; early spring through fall finish; pinch once, 2 weeks after liner planting; may be cut back if desired; PGRs not

necessary; finish time: 5–6 weeks for 4- to 5-inch containers and 10–12 weeks for 10- to 12-inch containers.

'Limelight' Hydrangea

(*Hydrangea paniculata*)

Characteristics: Partial shade to sun



For gardeners—'Limelight' is a fast-growing, hardy hydrangea that will reach 6–8 feet tall and wide and bloom from midsummer to fall. The flowers start out chartreuse, then turn pure white, and gradually change to rosy pink in the fall. Strong stems hold the flowers upright. There is also a dwarf version of 'Limelight'—Little Lime™ (*H. paniculata* 'Jane') that reaches 3–5 feet tall and wide. Plant 'Limelight' in a row to create a flowering wall to divide spaces in the landscape, or cluster three to five plants to create an accent. The flowers are great for fresh and dried arrangements.

For growers—pH 5.8–6.2; EC 0.6–0.9; fertilization: 100–150 ppm N; moderate light; moderate water; planting: spring to fall; vernalization: required; flowers on new wood; pests and disease: aphids and leaf spot; finish time: 12–18 weeks for 32-cell trays and 18–24 weeks for 50-cell trays.

Reference

www.provenwinners.com

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Publication 2642

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

(01-11)