

Bell County Master Gardeners

Tip of The Week

By Ilene Miller

“Texas Superstars Equals Success”

When you are looking for a well-adapted plant to add to your landscape, look for the Texas Superstars. Texas Superstar is a Cooperative program undertaken by the nursery industry and Texas A&M. Through research, they have determined which varieties of plants truly grow well all over our great state. Plants selected are disease and insect tolerant and have been tested and grown with minimum care and chemical use. Look for these hardy, special plants at area nurseries when planning your landscape additions.

Trees: The Lacey Oak has doubled in size in the four years its been planted in my yard. It holds its foliage late into the winter and has a nice upright shape. Other trees with the superstar logo I recommend you try are the Possumhaw Holly, the Shantung Maple, and the Chinese Pistache.

Vegetables: Look for these two hardy tomato varieties: Merced and Surefire. There are other vegetables also, just check their superstar status.

Roses: Belinda’s Dream has been a great addition to my small rose bed and another superstar is “Marie Daly.” But don’t forget to check out the colors of the “Knock Out” superstar.

Perennial: If you like the hibiscus types ask for “Flare,” “Lord Baltimore,” or the real showstopper “Moy Grande.” Two outstanding phlox selections are “Victoria” and “John Fanick” along with a wonderful verbena “Blue Princess.”

Annuals: There are a number of well-tested Superstar annuals, which you will enjoy in your garden. Look for “Burgundy Sun” or “Plum Parfait” coleus and the “Laura Bush” petunia. “Gold Star Esperanza”, Mexican Bush Sage, Trailing, Lantana, or “New Gold” lantana are other outstanding superstars. If you want a hardy bluebonnet, then *Lupinus texensis*, The Texas Bluebonnet or Texas Maroon Bluebonnet are good choices.

Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact ask.bcmga@gmail.com