



### Pick the perfect pepper

*Chuck Stevens, Alabama*

**Q** This year I grew a variety of hot and sweet peppers. Some were too spicy for my taste. How can I pick ones that are milder but still have a little kick? There are so many to choose from!

**A** Luckily, there's a great resource to help you know the pungency of chili peppers. The Scoville scale, developed by Wilbur Scoville in 1912, measures the hotness of a pepper, given in Scoville heat units (SHU). Capsaicin is the compound in peppers that produces a burning sensation. Knowing where a pepper ranks on the scale of 0 (sweet bell peppers) to 16,000,000 (pure capsaicin) you can choose ones that are best for your tongue. Take a look at the graphic at left to see how different peppers rank on the scale.