Top Varieites for the 2021 Season

Ball Colegrave Summer Trials



The Summer Trials at Ball Colegrave was probably one of the only Professional Trial Grounds in the UK or even Europe opening its doors to its customers this season.

“Trialling is at the heart of everything we do as we believe it is incredibly important for anyone involved in production and retail to see how the up and coming new plant developments perform in real growing and garden conditions” comments Stuart Lowen. “So, we were delighted to have been able to open our doors and receive so many trade visitors this summer”

The ‘working trials’ this summer focussed on both Annuals and Perennials and provided some great insight into both existing, new and over 1,000 experimental varieties.

As always, Ball Colegrave offers visitors the opportunity to vote for their favourite varieties from any of the trials or displays and are delighted to share these results with you. This year they have presented the results of the top Annual and Perennial varieties separately. There was certainly a significant increase of interest in Perennials this year, demonstrated by 50% of the votes being cast for Perennial varieties:

Customers Favourite Varieties for 2021 – Annuals

Position		
1	**NEW**	**Nemesia Lady™ Lisa**
2	**NEW**	**Osteospermum Serenity Sunshine Beauty**
3	**NEW**	**Calibrachoa Can Can® Orange Punch**
4	NEW	Petunia Tumbelina® Sophia
5		Calibrachoa Can Can® Sunrise Improved
6	NEW	Calibrachoa Can Can® Blueberry Punch
=7	NEW	Petunia RoyalSky
=7	NEW	Begonia Rivulet White Blush
=9	NEW	Petunia Tumbelina® Darcy Rosa
=9	NEW	Begonia MegaWatt series
=11	NEW	Helichrysum Silvio Spreading
=11	NEW	Nemesia Lady™ Emma
=11	NEW	Petunia Tumbelina® Superstar
=11	NEW	Verbena Showboat Crimson Velvet
=11	NEW	Petunia CircusSky
16	NEW	Calibrachoa Starlight Blue Improved
17	NEW	Salvia Roman Red

=18	NEW	Calibrachoa Can Can® Double OrangeTastic
=18	NEW	Salvia Purple & Bloom
=18	NEW	Trixi® Blue Baroque

NEW Nemesia ‘Lady™ Lisa’ (P)

Voted for by visitors as their overall favourite Annual Plant variety



There appears to be an almost insatiable market demand for Nemesia. This is somewhat driven by the incredible advances of breeders to develop outstanding colour breaks such as those in the Lady™ and Sundae series coupled with their reliability for growers in pot production, great retail colour presence and outstanding garden performance in all weathers.

One of 4 outstanding new colour additions for 2021 to the Lady™ series of British bred Nemesia, Lisa remained a clear leader throughout the summer trials.



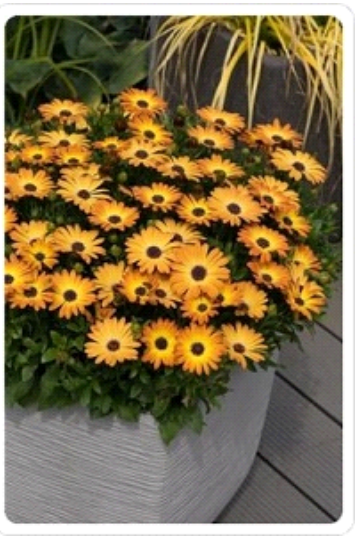
Its remarkably large, exquisite bicolour flowers have a most unique clean deep colouring, a light scent and is quite different from many other varieties currently on the market. The long flower performance and strong, yet compact and controlled habit makes Lady™ Lisa ideal for 10cm - 1 litre retail pot sales.

Other colours in the Lady™ series include Dawn, Emma and Jane, with additional new colours for 2021; Anne, Kate and Mary.

Garden height and spread 25 – 30cm.

Available from Ball Colegrave as a Ball 84 and Ball 142 plug, delivery weeks 6 - 20. The plugs are ready-pinched and ‘breaking’… perfect to simply pot and sell! A high impact colour Ball label is supplied with the plugs.

NEW Osteospermum ‘Serenity™ Sunshine Beauty’ (P)



This unique and exceptional new colour break makes ‘Serenity™ Sunshine Beauty’ a most eye-catching and stand-out colour at retail for premium patio pot sales.

The incredible orange vibrancy of the flower slowly fades to a warm yellow as it matures. The distinctive eye adds real punctation to the statement that this new variety makes in the garden. A continual stream of successional blooms each open with the same orange impact. This very special plant soon exhibits three colour shades of bloom at any one time, quite remarkable.



Sunshine Beauty joins its partner colours in the Serenity™ series, well known for its early flower timing and compact dwarf habit, making production and marketing quick, easy and reliable. The naturally free-branching, compact and mounding plant needs minimal use of PGR’s and can be grown under low temperatures, making it most suitable for pot tight production with energy saving possibilities.

Sunshine Beauty complements other novelty colours in the Serenity™ series but is a good 5-7 days earlier to flower…. that’s a week less production time, a great saving for growers!

Ideal for any pot size from 10.5cm to 1 litre pots or use 3 plants in a 3 litre pot for a real striking premium pot product.

In the garden, Sunshine Beauty will produce a long-lasting display from Spring to the first frost in patio containers or flower borders. Performs best in full sun, is low maintenance and where this is a problem, is deer and rabbit resistant. Garden height is 25 to 35cm with a spread of 35 to 50cm.

Produces a saleable flowering plant in just 7-8 weeks from a Ball 84 plug, delivery weeks 6-16. A high impact colour Ball label is supplied with the plugs.

NEW Calibrachoa ‘Can Can® Orange Punch’ (P)



This on-trend vibrant coloured Calibrachoa will pack-a-punch at retail!



The unique and intense colour of this new Calibrachoa make for a striking addition to the popular Can Can® series, extending it now to 10 amazing colours.

The large, orange flowers punctuated with a distinct eye create real head-turning hanging baskets for retail sales and in the garden.

Orange Punch forms a neat and well branched variety covering its entire canopy all season long with vibrant coloured flowers. In all our trials, the Can Can® series has always delivered outstanding wet weather performance and flower power.

Height and spread 25-38cm.

Ideal for 10.5- 13cm pots or hanging pot sales. Available as a Ball 84 and 142 tray, delivery weeks 6-20.
A high impact colour Ball label is supplied with the plugs.

Customers Favourite Varieties for 2021 – Perennials

Position		Variety Name
1	**NEW**	**Rudbeckia Sunbeckia® series**
2	**NEW**	**Agastache Morello**
3	**NEW**	**Penstemon Dakota™ Burgundy**
=4	NEW	Armeria Dreameria® series
=4		Helenium Short 'n' Sassy series (Future Introduction)
6	NEW	Senecio Angel Wings
=7	NEW	Agastache Little Adder
=7	NEW	Agastache Peachie Keen
=7		Centaurea Snowy Owl (Future Introduction)
=7	NEW	Echinacea SunMagic New Vintage Red
=7	NEW	Lobelia F1 Starship Blue
=7		Penstemon Dark Towers (Future Introduction)
=7	NEW	Salvia Mirage Blue
=7	NEW	Salvia Mirage Rose Bicolour
=7	NEW	Sedum Touchdown™ Teak
16	NEW	Penstemon Onyx and Pearl
17	NEW	Echinacea Moodz™ series
=18	NEW	Ajuga Princess Nadia
=18		Alstroemeria Summer Paradise Indian Summer®
20	NEW	Achillea Peter Cottontail

NEW Rudbeckia Sunbeckia® Series (P)

Voted for by visitors as their overall favourite Perennial plant variety



2020 has certainly been the year of Rudbeckia!

This genus was thoroughly trialled at Ball Colegrave this summer, coinciding with extensive trials also carried out across Europe by Fleuroselect, including Floral Fantasia in the grounds of RHS Hyde Hall.

So, we were delighted to discover that it was a Rudbeckia which stole the show for Perennial varieties at our own summer trials this July.



Out of all the Rudbeckia we trialled, the Sunbeckia® series has truly been outstanding, especially considering that just one plug filled a 23cm pot and produced over 50+ flowers in one season!

From the series the most popular variety has been Sophia, a plant with good vigour and large, long-lasting happy yellow flowers with a central green eye.

Other colours in the series available for 2021 include; Alicia, Laura, Luna, Mia, Ophelia & Victoria.

Garden height and spread 45-50cm

Available from Ball Colegrave as a Ball 40 plug, delivery weeks 18 & 20. All plugs are ready-pinched and 'breaking'… perfect to simply pot into 3 to 5 litre pots and sell in as little as 8 weeks or, bump-up into much larger patio tubs to maximise retail sales opportunities right into autumn.

NEW Agastache Morello **(P)**

Unique colour break and exceptional performance over many months!



It's understandable why Morello has already become an international star in the Agastache world since its recent introduction.

This hybrid has truly remarkable cherry rose coloured flowers, contrasting dark foliage with a burgundy underside.

The plants in our trials continuously flowered since the middle of June and carried on right through August. They also demonstrated a high tolerance to powdery mildew, remaining clean and fresh all through the Summer.



In the garden, Morello is also loved by the bees and grows to a height of 60cm.

The genus Agastache is thought to date back 25 million years. But it is only in recent years we have seen incredible developments for this little known and frankly somewhat unattractive plant. Breeders have worked tirelessly with this group of plants to select varieties which deliver a more refined bushy shaped plant for production and retail sales, a wider range of interesting colours, coupled with great disease resistance and hardiness.

Morello is a Grower's friend too as it bulks up quickly to make a strong upright plant. Compared to other varieties it isn't brittle making it an ideal for retail presentation in 3 or 5 litre pots. We would recommend 1 or 2 pinches to make a more outstanding shaped plant with multiple flower heads.

Produces a saleable flowering plant in just 8-10 weeks from a Ball 84 plug, delivery weeks 9 & 15. A high impact colour Ball label is supplied with the plugs.

NEW Penstemon Dakota™ Burgundy (P)

Superb spring foliage and high impact retail summer Perennial!



A unique border Penstemon with rich glossy, purple black foliage and lavender-violet flowers in June through to July.

Compared to 'Dark Towers', its nearest rival, Dakota™ Burgundy is shorter and more compact with stronger foliage colour and a better retail presentation. We grew these varieties side by side in our Trials and it was clear which our visitors preferred!



Once the flowers have faded the seed heads are very showy and the foliage darkens again making it another feature to extend the season in the garden. The stems with seed heads make attractive 'cuts' for flower arrangements.

Dakota™ burgundy is a tough, super hardy Perennial with a garden spread of 30cm and flowering height of 45cm. Attractive to pollinators.

Available from Ball Colegrave as a Ball 84 plug, delivery weeks 9 & 11. Ideal pot into 3 to 5 litre pots and sell in as little as 12 weeks. A high impact colour Ball label is supplied with the plugs.

Ball Colegrave Trial Grounds

Ball Colegrave has been conducting plant variety trials and customer open days from their Trial Grounds in West Adderbury for 56 years.
Today's Trial Grounds not only presents the companies assortment of catalogue varieties in a rich display of settings and retail ideas, but also comprehensively evaluates hundreds of new future lines before introduction.
This ensures that when a product is introduced in the Ball Colegrave catalogues, our staff and visitors have seen it and know it performs under UK growing conditions!
Trials are conducted all year round with an open house for customers during autumn, spring and summer. Over 25,000 Annual and Perennial plants are bedded out in the summer trial and display beds with an excess of 5,000 pot plants and 2,000 patio baskets/containers are planted up for the event.
Traditionally the Trial Grounds were attended by Parks and Nurserymen. Today they are joined by an ever-increasing number of Retail Plant Buyers looking for new plant and retail solutions.