



Evaluation of Viola Cultivars as Bedding Plants and Establishment of the Best-of-Class

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Summary: Florida is one of the top wholesale producers of bedding plants, and in 2003 was ranked fourth in the United States in annual bedding plant production and fifth in potted pansy (*Viola xwitterockiana*) and viola (*V. cornuta*) production. Evaluation of viola cultivars is vital for continued growth of the industry. We evaluated 66 viola cultivars in replicated class tests at the University of Florida's Gulf Coast Research and Education Center at Bradenton from 2000-04 and determined the best-of-class for use in future trials to compare against new entries in the same class. In this report, we provide objective plant measurements of vegetative and floral characteristics as well as subjective performance ratings. Viola cultivars were grouped into classes based on growth habit (standard vs. creeping), flower color, and flower color pattern, and best cultivar in each class was determined. Cultivars with an outstanding overall performance rating (combined foliage, flower, arthropod feeding symptom, and disease symptom ratings ≥ 5.5 out of 7 high scale) for best-of-class selections were: (standard black class) 'Sorbet Black Delight'; (standard cream class) 'Velour Cream Splash'; (standard mix class) 'Babyface Mixture'; (standard orange with purple, red-violet cap class) 'Penny Orange Jump-Up'; [standard purple (dark), blue-violet with dark eye and light cap class] 'Angel Violet Blotch'; (standard white class) 'Penny White'; [standard white face with purple (dark), red-violet cap class] 'Skippy White With Violet Wing'; (standard yellow class) 'Jewel Lemon Yellow'; (standard yellow with blotch class) 'Babyface Yellow'; [standard yellow/white face with purple (dark), blue-violet cap class] 'Penny Classic Jump-Up'. Solitary cultivar entries (without comparison) with outstanding performance were: 'Angel Frosted Yellow Blotch', 'Angel Violet Duet', 'Babyface White', 'Eryln Purple Yellow', 'Four Seasons Yellow With Pink Wing', 'Gem Antique Apricot', 'Gem Antique Pink', 'Gem Antique Lavender', 'Hobbit Bilbo Baggins', 'Jewel Deep Blue', 'Penny Azure Twilight', 'Penny Beaconsfield', 'Penny Cream', 'Penny Orange', 'Penny Orchid Frost', 'Penny Purple', 'Penny Yellow Jump-Up', 'Princess Lavender and Yellow', 'Princess Purple and Gold', 'Rebel Yellow', 'Sorbet Coconut Swirl', 'Sorbet Icy Blue', 'Sorbet Lemon Yellow Swirl', 'Sparkler Purple Orange Face', and 'Sparkler Purple Wing'. These cultivars would likely perform well in the southern U.S. or areas of the world with similar heat and cold hardiness zones.

To view this publication go to: [HortTechnology 16\(1\):167](#)

