

gardens. All do not propagate as readily as aucuba, abelia, and spirea but are certainly worth the extra effort.

NEW FOLIAGE PLANTS WITH POTENTIAL

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Shemin International is a world-wide plant resource for growers throughout the U.S. and Canada. We concentrate mostly on sales of foliage and flowering plants, with some ornamentals and perennials. Plants are provided in various stages, such as rooted and unrooted cuttings, seedlings, liners, or tissue culture in stages 2, 3, and 4. Our buyers travel extensively in search of new plants as well as high quality established cultivars. Plants come from Holland, Denmark, Belgium, Israel, Ivory Coast, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Australia, and the U.S. I will briefly describe the plants we feel have or will have potential impact on the U.S. and Canadian markets.

1). *Dieffenbachia* 'Nelly'. This plant is a mutation found in France. It has a U.S. patent and is sold as an unrooted cutting. It has a strong branching habit, does not develop a leggy cane like other "camro" cultivars. The leaves are durable, with blended tones of yellow, cream and green. One 4- to 6-in. unrooted cutting produces an extremely compact 10-in. container plant in approximately 8 months.

2). *Dieffenbachia* 'Tropic Sun'. 'Tropic Sun' is a branched sport of *dieffenbachia* 'Tropic Snow' found in Belgium. One 18- to 20-in. unrooted cutting makes a heavily-branched 10-in. container in approximately 9 months. U.S. patent is pending.

3). *Ficus benjamina* 'Golden Princess'. This ficus, found in Holland, has lime green and cream colors on the leaf margin. It develops very distinct variegation up to 70% shade and grows as fast as *F. benjamina*.

4). *Schefflera* 'Diane': This plant, found in Japan, has yellow and green variegated leaves and stem.

5). *Schefflera* 'Gold Capello': Found in Holland, Gold Capello is a large grower with yellow-gold and green leaves. It is the strongest grower we have found of all the variegated *scheffleras*.

6). *Schefflera* 'Renate': 'Renate' is solid green, very compact and has a curly-edged leaf.

7). *Stereospermum* 'Danielle' or 'China Doll': 'Danielle' was found in Holland. This is a member of the Bignoniaceae family and is also referred to as *Radermachera sinicia*. It can be produced from seed or cuttings. The plant has a lacy, delicate look with green maple-like leaves, but it is very durable for the interior landscape and grows quickly to produce large standard trees or bushes. Use of B-Nine will regulate growth and produce a compact table plant.

8). *Brachychiton populneus*. Bottle tree. The bottle tree is indigenous to desert regions of Australia and Africa and comes to us by way of Israel. This is a new application or treatment of an established ornamental tree used in the landscapes of southern California. These are among the most impressive trees of the world because their trunks resemble bottles. The plants, tested under low- and high-light conditions, are very durable and need little water. Extreme twisted and gnarled trunks are enhanced by applications of Cycocel. Plants are shipped as dormant, woody 8-to 10-in. trees. In a low-profile container, bottle tree will develop into an exotic bonsai-type plant in 3 to 4 months.

These 8 plants I have described have been successfully introduced into the U.S. and Canada. The next group of 10 plants are ones that are currently being tested for marketability.

1). *Ardisia japonica* 'Ito-Fukurin'. Common name marlberry: The plant comes from Japan and China. It is an herbaceous perennial, broad-leaved, compact ground cover. It has a moderate growth rate and becomes 6 in. high with a 4-to 8-ft. spread. Foliage is green with white and cream edges. The showy fruit is scarlet red. In the landscape it has value as a ground cover, a border, or tub plant. It can be used to obtain a naturalizing effect or on a slope. It does best in acid soil that is well-drained but moist. Marlberry grows in half to full shade. It propagates by division of the rhizomes. It is hardy to zone 8.

2). *Ardisia japonica* 'Hakukan': 'Hakukan' is similar in many respects to 'Ito Fukurin' with the following exceptions. It has green foliage with white edges with pink new growth and pink variegation. It has been mentioned as possibly being hardy to zone 5 or 6. It could make a good hanging-basket plant. It spreads rapidly by rhizomes.

3). *Homalomena novoguineensis*, family Araceae. Commonly referred to as silver-drop tongue. The plant comes from New Guinea and is hardy to zone 10. It is herbaceous, perennial, and broad-leaved with moderate growth and compact habit. It reaches a height of 1 to 2 ft. with a spread of 2 to 4 ft. Silver-drop tongue has variegated green with silver-green fo-

liage. It has landscape value as a border, tub, or specimen plant or in a mass planting. It needs well-drained soil and tolerates half to full shade. It propagates by division.

4). *Aspidistra elatior*, family Araceae. Cast-iron plant: *Aspidistra* comes from Japan and is hardy to zone 7 in well-protected sites. It is an herbaceous broad-leaved perennial. It has a slow growth rate and remains compact. It reaches a height of 1 to 2 ft. and a spread of up to 2 ft. One cultivar has foliage variegated with yellow spots. Flowers are brown and appear in spring. It has value as a ground cover, border, or tub plant and is an excellent, durable interior landscape plant. It needs a well-drained-soil and will tolerate half to full shade, dust, humidity and drought. It propagates by division, and perhaps will do well in tissue culture.

5). *Boehmeria biloba*, family Araceae. False nettle, an herbaceous, perennial, evergreen shrub. It is compact and has a moderate growth habit. It is 6 to 12 inches tall with a spread of 2 ft. Foliage is green; flowers are light green and appear in the fall. It has value as a specimen, tub and indoor plant. It requires a well-drained soil and will tolerate half to full shade, heat and humidity. It propagates from herbaceous cuttings. Related to the *Pilea*, it has an interesting, feathery, leaf texture.

The following five plants are a group of different sansevierias, family Agavaceae. All are hardy to zone 9 and are excellent, durable house plants. They are propagated by herbaceous cuttings, rhizome division, offsets, or possibly tissue culture.

6). *Sansevieria senegambica*: This perennial, an evergreen succulent, comes from Senegal and Gambia. It has a moderate growth rate and moderate density. A mature plant is 1 to 2 ft. high with a spread up to 2 ft. Its foliage is green.

7). *Sansevieria trifasciata* 'Silver Queen': This, too, is perennial and succulent with a moderate growth rate and density. It has a height of 2 to 4 ft. It has silver foliage and greenish-white flowers. 'Silver Queen' comes from South Africa.

8). *Sansevieria longiflora*: This species has been grown in Hawaii. It is herbaceous, perennial, and evergreen. Growth rate and density are moderate. This sansevieria reaches a spread of 1 to 2 ft. Foliage is green with silver specks. It will tolerate half to full shade, dust, and drought.

9). *Sansevieria desertii*. Common name is rhino-grass: Origin is Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. Another succulent perennial, rhino-grass has a slow growth rate and an open density. At maturity it is 2 to 4 ft. high. The flower is white.

10). *Sansevieria suffruticosa*: This sansevieria comes from Kenya. It has a moderate growth rate and remains open.

We believe that among these plants you will find some valuable additions to the list of those you already grow.

TEN OUTSTANDING PERENNIALS

DAAN KNEPPERS

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1). *Paeonia*, family Paeoniaceae, peony:

Peonies are rated among the most beautiful of all perennials, both in plant and flower. They are easy to grow and long-lived. The peony is hardy in every state of the U.S. and in Canada. Disease and insects rarely bother them if the following suggestions are followed. They make excellent cut flowers and give beautiful landscape effects.

They do best in a sunny well-drained location. Plant a peony with the top of the eyes pointing up, eyes not over 2 in. below soil level. Plant in 1 gal. or 2 gal. container. The planting time is in the fall or early spring.

Fertilize peonies with a slow-release fertilizer (low in nitrogen), after the first roots are established, in the spring or early fall.

The stembuds, or "eyes" as they are called, are formed soon after blooming season at the base of the stems. They are the beginning of next year's growth.

The blooming season begins in early spring, about the time the tulips open, and it ends 6 to 8 weeks later. As soon as the foliage turns brown in late summer, leaves may be cut off to soil level.

Spraying plants against *Botrytis*. Spray the plants against *Botrytis* as soon as new shoots appear. Spray the second time when the plant is half grown, and spray again just before they bloom. Use Captan or Benlate.

Why do peonies not bloom? Plants may be too young and immature or planted too deep. Buds may have been killed by late frost or by *Botrytis*. In this case they turn black and die. Too much shade makes plants leafy and tall with little bloom.

Peonies are sold in the trade by the number of eyes: 2 to 3 eyes/division, 3 to 5 eyes/division. Following is a short list of outstanding cultivars.