

# GARDEN NEWS

It looks like the sun may do more than peek at us between rainstorms this week. Whether or not the sun does its part, however, we are ready for some heat in the garden! For instant gratification, we'd like to recommend a new series of spring-blooming arctotis with intense, sizzling color. If you have a little more patience – and maybe a greenhouse – you can pick up a few veggie starts and begin to anticipate the delectable flavors of homegrown tomatoes, squash, and cucumbers, as well as the hardier greens, brassicas, and artichoke.

## ARCTOTIS HYBRIDS

Their parent plant, *Venidium fastuosum* – also known as Monarch of the Veldt or African Daisy – is a South African native well known for its richly colored flowerheads and deerproof gray or silvery foliage. We've grown 'Zulu Prince' and others for years. But new Arctotis hybrids bring even more intense hues to the garden.

These compact, silver-leaved, daisy-flowered plants flower best in the cool weather of spring and fall. They initiated their buds during the short days of late winter and are now budded and blooming, ready to shine their radiant inner light over spring beds. 'Bumble Bee,' 'Peachy Mango,' 'Pink Sugar,' 'Sashe,' and 'Sunspot' bloom in glowing shades of yellow, coral, orange, rose, and fuchsia through June, take time to rest while you enjoy their compact silvery foliage, then rebloom in fall. Disbud after the flowers die for the best fall flowering.



## VEGGIES

The expression 'Hot to Trot' has taken on new meaning for us! Our greenhouses are almost bursting at their seams with crops waiting for warmer nights. Though cole crops (brassicas and greens) and edible peas flourish in this weather, tropical vegetables such as eggplant and peppers must wait for warmer nights. Even direct sowing of corn and beans must wait until the soil warms up to 48-50 degrees.

With a greenhouse or other protection, though, you can get ahead of the weather by transplanting our 4 inch vegetable starts into larger pots so they can grow while they wait for frost-free nights to come. Each year, we try to grow a selection of novel or uncommon vegetables, including many heirloom varieties. There's nothing wrong with long green zucchinis and big red tomatoes, but here are some suggestions if you want a little variety this year:

The playful 'Pool Ball' series of round summer squash provides tons of small fruits just the right size for stuffing. Grow pale green 'Cue Ball,' bright golden 'One Ball,' and deep green 'Eight Ball' for a beautiful array of color in stirfries, soups, salads, or shish kebab! The prolific bush-type plants start



producing at just 45 to 55 days – harvest the crisp round fruits at 2 to 4 inches in diameter for the best flavor.

Cherry tomatoes can be ready to eat earlier than larger varieties! We grow a rainbow array of cherry and grape varieties. ‘Chocolate Cherry’ (rich brown, see photo), ‘Snow White’ (ivory), and ‘Sungold’ (golden orange) are just a few of the unusual colors you could add to a summer salad. Just remember to protect them for now, until nights are warmer.



We will keep you updated as more warm-weather varieties, like 2008 AAS winner Eggplant ‘Hansel,’ become available. Visit our [complete list](#) and catalog of vegetable varieties to start planning.

Recent issues of GARDEN NEWS may be viewed at [www.loghouseplants.com/gardennews.htm](http://www.loghouseplants.com/gardennews.htm)