

2006 MGA Green Thumb Awards Given to 10 New Gardening Products

Five new plant varieties and five new gardening products have won 2006 MGA Green Thumb Awards presented by the Mailorder Gardening Association. Bringing home awards in the Plants, Bulbs and Seeds division were Red and Blue Spring Duet Bulb Bed from Dutch Gardens, *Agapanthus sp.* 'Cold Hardy White' from High Country Gardens, Organic Potato Blossom Festival from Wood Prairie Farm, *Brugmansia* 'Inca Sun' (Angel's Trumpet) from Logee's, and 'Sweet Dream' Begonia from Dutch Gardens.

Honored in the Tools, Supplies and Accessories division were the Water-Wise Timer from Charley's Greenhouse & Garden, Pollinating Pals - Mason Bee Nest from The Lawn and Garden Performance Group, The Post™ from Telcom USA, The Defense PAC™ from The Pond Guy, Inc., and the E-System from Mantis.

Winners of the 2006 MGA Green Thumb Awards were chosen by an independent panel of garden writers and editors. The winning products were selected based on their uniqueness, technological innovation, ability to solve a gardening problem or provide a gardening opportunity, and potential appeal to gardeners.

The MGA Green Thumb Awards recognize outstanding new garden products available by mail or online. The awards are sponsored by the Mailorder Gardening Association, the world's largest nonprofit association of companies that sell garden products directly to consumers. For more information visit the MGA website at www.mailordergardening.com.



2006 MGA Green Thumb Award Winners – Plants, Bulbs and Seeds

Red and Blue Spring Duet Bulb Bed **Dutch Gardens**

Planting spring-flowering bulbs has never been easier. The Red and Blue Spring Duet Bulb Bed contains a total of 45 bulbs (seven bright red 'Cassini' tulips and 38 blue grape hyacinths) beautifully arranged and evenly spaced in a 14-inch biodegradable planting tray. Just dig a hole, insert the tray and cover it with soil. Planting takes less than five minutes and guarantees a colorful display of flowers next spring. The Red and Blue Spring Duet Bulb Bed sells for \$24.95 from Dutch Gardens, 1-800-944-2250, www.dutchgardens.com.



Red and Blue Spring Duet Bulb Bed
Dutch Gardens

Agapanthus sp. ‘Cold Hardy White’
High Country Gardens

A wildflower native to the Drakensberg Mountains of South Africa, *Agapanthus* sp. ‘Cold Hardy White’ is the first cold-hardy variety of this very popular flowering perennial. ‘Cold Hardy White’ has large umbels of bright white flowers held on sturdy stems over low-growing strap-like deciduous leaves. This delightful new variety grows easily in full sun or morning sun with afternoon shade in average garden soils. It prefers regular irrigation and will reach 15 inches tall and 12 inches wide throughout USDA zones 5-10. Available for \$7.99 each in premium pots from High Country Gardens, 1-800-925-9387, www.highcountrygardens.com.



***Agapanthus* sp.**
‘Cold Hardy White’
High Country Gardens



Organic Potato Blossom Festival
Wood Prairie Farm

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Wood Prairie Farm

The Organic Potato Blossom Festival is a unique collection of gourmet potato varieties chosen for their exceptional blossom beauty and fragrance. In midseason, enjoy nearly a month of potato blooms in shades of blue, lavender, purple, pink and white. Come harvest time, enjoy a spectacular bounty of rainbow-colored spuds. The six different varieties of potatoes include Red Cloud, Carola, Cranberry Red, All-Blue, Onaway, and Butte. These Maine Double-Certified Organic Potatoes perfectly fill a four by four foot planting bed. The Organic Potato Blossom Festival sells for \$19.95 from Wood Prairie Farm, 1-800-829-9765, www.woodprairie.com.

Brugmansia ‘Inca Sun’
Logee’s

Brugmansia ‘Inca Sun’ (Angel’s Trumpet) is a new hybrid and a breakthrough in the world of Brugmansias. This prolific bloomer is just two feet tall yet produces dozens of fragrant, soft yellow trumpet-shaped flowers. This variety is also unique because it can continuously bloom from both shoots and spurs. (Typically, Angel’s Trumpets flower, then stop, grow, and flower again.) Because ‘Inca Sun’ continues to grow and flower simultaneously, it is never without bloom. ‘Inca Sun’ was hybridized by Kyle Courtney of Norwalk, Iowa. Enjoy *Brugmansia* ‘Inca Sun’ outside in a patio container during the summer and bring it inside for color and form in the winter months. Available for \$24.95 from Logee’s, 1-888-330-8038, www.logees.com.



Brugmansia ‘Inca Sun’
Logee’s

‘Sweet Dream’ Begonia
Dutch Gardens

‘Sweet Dream’ is a very special begonia that was developed by the Troch family in Belgium, who are known around the world for breeding fabulous begonias. When breeding ‘Sweet Dream,’ the Troches started with some of the genes from their acclaimed ‘Champagne’ begonia so they knew the new variety would have similar vigor and bloom production. The happy surprise came when the salmon-colored blooms opened and they were fragrant! ‘Sweet Dream’ grows to 8-10 inches tall with a 20-24 inch spread. It grows best in a semi-shady location protected from hot sun. Three bulbs sell for \$17.95 from Dutch Gardens, 1-800-944-2250, www.dutchgardens.com.



‘Sweet Dream’ Begonia
Dutch Gardens

2006 Green Thumb Award Winners – Tools, Supplies and Accessories



Water-Wise Timer
Charley’s Greenhouse & Garden

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The Water-Wise Timer features an exclusive operating schedule that allows water to penetrate soil with less run-off and less evaporation. Automatic intermittent timing turns the water on for five minutes, followed by a 10-minute off cycle, repeating for up to three hours. The timer then shuts off automatically. There are no batteries and no wires to run. Just hook up to standard garden hose connections. The Water-Wise Timer sells for \$19.95 from Charley’s Greenhouse & Garden, 1-800-322-4707, www.charleysgreenhouse.com.

Pollinating Pals - Mason Bee Nest
The Lawn and Garden Performance Group

The Blue Mason Bee is one of the most efficient pollinators in the garden. Each Mason Bee does the pollination work of 120 honeybees! The Pollinating Pals Mason Bee Nest attracts Mason Bees and provides an environment so they can make themselves at home in your garden. Once living in the nest, the Mason Bees will do their job of pollinating nearby plants, improving the quantity and quality of fruit, vegetables and flowers. Efficacy studies performed in Sweet Cherry Orchards in Ogden, Utah, showed a yield of 31.5 thousand pounds of cherries using the Mason Bee Nest compared with 9.5 thousand pounds of cherries using standard honeybees for pollination. Two sizes of Mason Bee Nests are available—small for \$19.95 and large for \$39.95. Available from Orcon Organic Control, 1-323-937-7444, www.organiccontrol.com.



Pollinating Pals - Mason Bee Nest
Lawn and Garden Performance Group

The Post™
Telcom USA, Inc.

A real granite post weighs up to 400 pounds and can cost hundreds of dollars. Although it looks like genuine granite, The Post™ is made of rotationally molded polyethylene, so it is lightweight and weatherproof. The Post measures 6 inches by 6 inches by 54 inches tall, making it ideal for a variety of landscape and gardening applications. It can be used as a plant hanger post, a property marker, a mailbox post or a garden water source. Installation is easy—just slide The Post over a 4-inch by 6-inch timber, add accessories and the project is done. The Post sells for \$99.99 from Telcom USA, Inc., 1-888-899-4216, www.telcomgardenproducts.com.



The Post™
Telcom USA, Inc.



The Defense PAC™
The Pond Guy, Inc.

The Defense PAC™
The Pond Guy, Inc.

The Defense PAC™ was designed to end the guesswork of creating and maintaining a healthy pond ecosystem. This kit solves the issues that so many pond owners face such as poor water quality, unwanted muck, fish health and maintaining clear water. The Defense PAC includes five separate products for optimum pond maintenance, including Nature's Defense (Member Tested and Recommended by the National Home Gardening Club), Clarity Defense, Muck Defense, Seasonal Defense and Stable Defense. The result is a clean, healthy pond. The small Defense PAC (for ponds up to 2,000 gallons) sells for \$149.99 and the large Defense PAC (for ponds up to 3,500 gallons) sells for \$198.99 from The Pond Guy, 1-888-POND-520, www.thepondguy.com.

Mantis E-System
Mantis

The Mantis E-System is a revolutionary extended-reach solution that incorporates four separate yard and garden tools into one easy-to-use system. Four different attachments snap into the electric Power Head—a Hedge Trimmer, Pruner, Line Trimmer and Edger. Just plug in the ergonomic Power Head and you're ready to handle a wide variety of lawn and landscape jobs. The E-System Power Head has a 36-inch-long shaft that lets you easily reach up into tall trees or down to low-growing groundcovers. The Hedge Trimmer attachment can even be adjusted to reach virtually any cutting angle. The Mantis E-System sells for \$395 plus shipping exclusively from Mantis, 1-800-366-6268, www.mantis.com.



Mantis E-System
Mantis

The Mailorder Gardening Association, the world's largest nonprofit association of companies that sell garden products directly to consumers, sponsors the MGA Green Thumb Awards each year. For more information visit the MGA website at www.mailordergardening.com.