



Annual Flowers

Prairie Star

A collection of annual flowers tested by K-State for the prairie climate

Prairie Star annual flowers are varieties best adapted to the challenging prairie climate. Planting varieties in the Prairie Star collection is the best way to assure the eye-catching appearance gardeners hope for. The list contains annual flower varieties that have exhibited superior performances for two years or more in Kansas bedding-plant research trials. Prairie Star flowers are the best of the best — flowers that grow and bloom abundantly with minimal care.

Flowering plant research is headquartered at the Horticulture Research and Extension Center in Olathe with other flower trial sites in Wichita, Hays, and Colby. Research trial sites encompass two USDA cold hardiness zones (5, 6) and two American Horticulture Society heat tolerance zones (7, 8). All varieties on the list grow well across the state, east to west and north to south.

Plants are rated for vigor, defined as how fast and how strong they grow and how much substance they have. They are also rated on floriferousness, or total overall visual impact of the flower display. The number of flowers, size of flowers and how they are borne on the plant are important. Flowers that hang down with backs showing are not as pretty as those presented in profile. Ideally, flowers should tilt up to greet onlookers. Floriferousness ratings are a combination of the number and size of flowers and how they are borne on the plant.

On plants where the foliar display is paramount, the floriferousness rating is adapted to take into account the color and visual impact of the leaves, not flowers. These entries are listed in the “Plants for Foliage Display” section. All Prairie Star Flowers are recommended for use in both landscape and container plantings. However, the section with “Plants for Container Gardens” includes varieties that have excelled in the container trials, but may not grow well when planted in the flower bed.

Both vigor and floriferousness are rated on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being almost dead or no flowers, 4 being acceptable, and 7 excellent. All plants on the Prairie Star list have scored a 6 or higher for vigor and floriferousness combined, at all trial sites for at least two years. Plant height and width are measured from a mature plant in mid-August.

Flowering plant varieties in research trials are submitted by or collected from plant breeders and distributors from around the world. All varieties on the list are available from retail garden centers or mail-order plant companies. The list contains many varieties. No greenhouse, garden center, or nursery is likely to carry them all. The Prairie Star list is not a commercial brand or product line. Gardeners should look for the specific variety on the list, i.e. not generic geraniums but Rocky Mountain Dark Red Geranium. Not all geraniums grow well on the prairie. Varieties on the list are truly superior. Plants at garden centers may or may not be labeled Prairie Star, so take the list to shop for specific varieties.

Plants for Flower Display

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Ageratum	Artist Series (All Colors)	sun	12	14
Ageratum	High Tide Blue	sun	18	18
Angelonia	Angelface Series (All Colors)	sun	25	20
Angelonia	Angelmist Spreading Purple Imp.	sun	15	26
Angelonia	Serena White	sun	15	15
Begonia	Ambassador Pink	sun or shade	9	11
Begonia	BabyWing White	sun or shade	12	18
Begonia	BIG Series (All Colors)	sun or shade	16	16
Begonia	Brandy (Pink/Dark Leaves)	sun or shade	11	11
Begonia	Doublet Series (All Colors)	sun or shade	11	12
Begonia	Dragon Wing Red	sun or shade	15	15
Begonia	Party Pink (Bronze Leaves)	sun or shade	14	10
Begonia	Vodka (Red/Dark Leaves)	sun or shade	10	11
Begonia	Whisky (White/Dark Leaves)	sun or shade	11	10
Canna	Chocolate Sunrise	sun	38	36
Canna	Magic Pink	sun	47	42
Canna	Rosita	sun	46	38

Plants for Flower Display

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Canna	Shining Diva	sun	43	38
Celosia	Cramer's Amazon (Magenta)	sun	49	26
Celosia	Flamingo Feather Purple	sun	47	27
Celosia	Fresh Look Red	sun	18	13
Celosia	Hi-Z (Purple)	sun	46	25
Celosia	New Look Red	sun	19	13
Celosia	WATCH (Hot Pink)	sun	13	15
Cleome	Senorita Rosalita	sun	32	20
Cosmos	Cosmic Mix	sun	19	18
Cosmos	Cosmic Orange	sun	15	13
Dahlia	Dalina Grande Toluca	sun	14	20
Dianthus	Amazon Neon Cherry	sun	20	15
Dianthus	Amazon Neon Purple	sun	23	13
Echinacea	PowWow Wild Berry	sun	21	19
Euphorbia	Diamond Frost (White)	sun	14	18
Gaillardia	Arizona Apricot	sun	12	14
Gaillardia	Mesa Yellow	sun	18	20
Gaillardia	Plume Series (All Colors)	sun	16	15
Gaillardia	Torch Series (All Colors)	sun	17	15
Geranium	Americana Series (All Colors)	sun	12	16
Geranium	Cascade Acapulco Compact (Pink/White)	sun	8	21
Geranium	Cascade Lila Compact (Lavender/Pink)	sun	10	22
Geranium	Cascade Sofie (Salmon/Pink)	sun	12	21
Geranium	Classic Dark Salmon	sun	11	16
Geranium	Classic Salmon	sun	14	17
Geranium	Contessa Dark Red	sun	11	17
Geranium	Fidelity Salmon	sun	12	15
Geranium	Fireworks Cherry	sun	11	16
Geranium	Patriot Bright Red	sun	12	16
Geranium	Patriot Watermelon	sun	14	16
Geranium	Patriot White	sun	12	15
Geranium	Rocky Mountain Series (All Colors)	sun	13	17
Geranium	Showcase Light Lavender	sun	12	15
Geranium	Showcase Salmon	sun	13	14
Geranium	Tango Rose Splash	sun	12	13
Geranium, Exotic	Crystal Palace Gem (Red Flower, Yellow Leaves)	sun	14	20
Geranium, Exotic	Caliente Coral Pink	sun	17	16
Geranium, Exotic	Caliente Rose	sun	16	16
Geranium, Exotic	Graffiti Double Red	sun	10	12
Geranium, Exotic	Graffiti Double Salmon	sun	14	12
Geranium, Seed	BullsEye Light Pink	sun	16	16
Geranium, Seed	Maverick Star	sun	15	18
Geranium, Seed	Pinto Series (All Colors)	sun	14	17
Geranium, Seed	Ringo 2000 Lavender	sun	12	13
Gomphrena	Las Vegas Series (All Colors)	sun	20	25
Helenium	Dakota (Gold)	sun	12	16
Impatiens	Accent Coral	partial shade	17	13
Impatiens	Accent Lavender Blue	partial shade	18	13

Plants for Flower Display

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Impatiens	Jambalaya Pink	partial shade	18	18
Impatiens	Jambalaya Red	partial shade	18	16
Impatiens	Jambalaya White Imp.	partial shade	18	16
Impatiens	Metallic Deep Salmon	partial shade	15	12
Impatiens	Showstopper Cherry	partial shade	18	16
Impatiens	Showstopper Tropical Flair Mix	partial shade	12	13
Impatiens	Super Elfin Blue Pearl	partial shade	12	15
Impatiens	Super Elfin XP Rose Starburst	partial shade	13	17
Impatiens	Super Elfin XP Violet Starburst	partial shade	18	21
Impatiens, Double	Fiesta Series (All Colors)	partial shade	22	21
Impatiens, Double	Rockapulco Series (All Colors)	partial shade	22	20
Impatiens, New Guinea	Infinity Series (All Colors)	partial shade	14	17
Impatiens, New Guinea	Super Sonic Cherry Cream	partial shade	14	12
Lantana	Bandana Series (All Colors)	sun	16	28
Lantana	Landmark Series (All Colors)	sun	32	43
Lantana	Luscious Series (All Colors)	sun	23	32
Lantana	New Gold	sun	19	56
Lantana	Patriot Classic Desert Sunset (Pink/Orange/Yellow)	sun	28	35
Lantana	Patriot Hot Country (Bright Pink/Orange)	sun	18	25
Lantana	Trailing Lavender	sun	21	44
Lobularia	Snow Princess	sun	12	24
Marigold	Antigua Primrose	sun	16	14
Marigold	Inca II Primrose	sun	22	16
Marigold	Inca II Yellow	sun	20	16
Marigold	Moonsong Deep Orange	sun	20	10
Marigold	Perfection Mix	sun	29	19
Marigold	Perfection Yellow	sun	30	17
Marigold	Taishan Series (All Colors)	sun	19	20
Mecardonia	Gold Dust	sun	8	17
Melampodium	Derby (Orange)	sun	20	17
Melampodium	Million Gold	sun	17	20
Melampodium	Showstar Yellow	sun	22	27
Nierembergia	Augusta Blue Skies	sun	12	14
Nierembergia	Mont Blanc (White)	sun	5	16
Ornamental Grass	Melinis Savannah Ruby Grass	sun	32	32
Pentas	Northern Lights Lavender	sun	18	15
Petunia	Carpet Lilac	sun	16	23
Petunia	Cascadia Series (All Colors)	sun	8	24
Petunia	Dream Series (All Colors)	sun	10	28
Petunia	Easy Wave Series (All Colors)	sun	7	45
Petunia	Fantasy Crystal Red	sun	12	15
Petunia	Fantasy Mix	sun	10	18
Petunia	Hurrah Series (All Colors)	sun	17	22
Petunia	Jamboree White	sun	9	32
Petunia	Kahuna Series (Violet and White)	sun	27	51
Petunia	Littletunia Series (All Colors)	sun	12	30
Petunia	Madness Series (All Colors)	sun	12	32
Petunia	Odyssey Marco Polo (Lavender)	sun	11	28

Plants for Flower Display

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Petunia	Plush Series (All Colors)	sun	9	36
Petunia	Primetime Lavender	sun	19	24
Petunia	Primetime Rose	sun	16	24
Petunia	Ray Series (All Colors)	sun	6	25
Petunia	Shockwave Series (All Colors)	sun	14	36
Petunia	Storm Series (All Colors)	sun	17	35
Petunia	Suncatcher Pink Vein	sun	11	25
Petunia	Suncatcher White	sun	12	22
Petunia	Supertunia Bordeaux	sun	7	46
Petunia	Supertunia Citrus	sun	11	32
Petunia	Supertunia Cotton Candy	sun	10	48
Petunia	Supertunia Giant Pink	sun	6	45
Petunia	Supertunia Indigo Charm	sun	11	33
Petunia	Supertunia Lavender Pink	sun	7	48
Petunia	Supertunia Lavender Skies	sun	10	32
Petunia	Supertunia Mini Series (All Colors)	sun	7	48
Petunia	Supertunia Raspberry Blast	sun	9	33
Petunia	Supertunia Royal Magenta	sun	8	33
Petunia	Supertunia Royal Velvet	sun	8	33
Petunia	Supertunia Sangria Charm	sun	12	30
Petunia	Supertunia Vista Bubble Gum (Pink)	sun	18	45
Petunia	Supertunia Vista Fuchsia	sun	14	48
Petunia	Supertunia Vista Silverberry	sun	14	46
Petunia	Supertunia White	sun	5	39
Petunia	Tidal Wave Series (All Colors)	sun	14	36
Petunia	Wave Misty Lilac	sun	12	36
Portulaca	Fairytale Series (All Colors)	sun	11	23
Portulaca	Pazazz Series (All Colors)	sun	11	28
Rudbeckia	Denver Daisy	sun	18	18
Rudbeckia	Prairie Sun	sun	24	16
Rudbeckia	Tiger Eye Gold	sun	20	18
Salvia farinacea	Evolution	sun	22	20
Salvia farinacea	Reference Blue & White	sun	25	20
Salvia farinacea	SallyFun Series (All Colors)	sun	25	22
Salvia farinacea	Silver	sun	23	19
Salvia farinacea	Victoria (Blue)	sun	27	23
Scaevola	Blue Shamrock	sun	15	26
Scaevola	New Wonder (Purple)	sun	10	22
Scaevola	Outback Fan Dancer	sun	8	23
Scaevola	Outback Purple Fan	sun	15	28
Scaevola	Whirlwind Blue	sun	10	18
Scaevola	Whirlwind Blue Velvet	sun	13	24
Snapdragon (Antirrhinum)	Rocket Cherry	sun	28	10
Torenia	Catalina Blue	sun	10	18
Torenia	Catalina Pink	sun	10	20
Verbena	Donalena Red Amour	sun	10	32
Verbena	Donalena Violet XL	sun	10	32
Verbena	Escapade Pink	sun	14	24

Plants for Flower Display

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Verbena	Lanai Bright Pink	sun	15	24
Verbena	Lanai Lavender Star	sun	15	24
Verbena	Superbena Burgundy	sun	18	24
Verbena	Superbena Coral Red	sun	12	24
Verbena	Superbena Large Lilac Blue	sun	16	24
Verbena	Superbena Pink Shades	sun	14	30
Verbena	Superbena Purple	sun	13	30
Verbena	Superbena Royale Chambray	sun	11	24
Verbena	Temari Blue	sun	12	34
Verbena	Temari Cherry Red	sun	12	34
Verbena	Tukana Scarlet Star	sun	12	20
Verbena	Tukana White	sun	8	32
Vinca (Catharanthus)	Cooler Series (All Colors)	sun	18	15
Vinca (Catharanthus)	First Kiss Blueberry	sun	8	10
Vinca (Catharanthus)	Mediterranean Series (All Colors)	sun	7	16
Vinca (Catharanthus)	Nirvana Series (All Colors)	sun	8	18
Vinca (Catharanthus)	Pacifica Series (All Colors)	sun	13	18
Vinca (Catharanthus)	Pacifica XP Series (All Colors)	sun	16	20
Vinca (Catharanthus)	SunShower White with Eye	sun	10	16
Vinca (Catharanthus)	SunStorm Orchid	sun	16	17
Vinca (Catharanthus)	SunStorm White with Eye	sun	14	18
Vinca (Catharanthus)	Titan Series (All Colors)	sun	15	23
Zinnia	Benary's Giant Series (All Colors)	sun	34	24
Zinnia	Crystal White	sun	15	24
Zinnia	Oklahoma Series (All Colors)	sun	26	25
Zinnia	Profusion Orange	sun	16	22
Zinnia	Profusion Red	sun	16	22
Zinnia	Profusion White	sun	16	22
Zinnia	Queen Series (All Colors)	sun	30	30
Zinnia	Short Stuff Orange	sun	11	20
Zinnia	Star Orange	sun	17	24
Zinnia	Zahara Series (All Colors)	sun	15	24

Plants for Foliage Display

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Basil (Ocimum)	Boxwood	sun	14	18
Basil (Ocimum)	Pesto Perpetuo	sun or shade	32	18
Canna	Tropicana (Orange/Variiegated Leaves)	sun	70	18
Coleus	Alligator Tears	sun or shade	27	24
Coleus	Aurora Black Cherry	sun or shade	19	17
Coleus	Dark Chocolate	sun or shade	23	18
Coleus	Dipt in Wine	sun or shade	27	16
Coleus	Kaleidoscope Mix	shade	11	16
Coleus	LifeLime	part shade/shade	15	17
Coleus	Rainbow Mix	shade	30	27
Coleus	Royal Glissade	sun or shade	26	24
Coleus	Stained Glassworks Kiwi Fern (Purple Green Red)	shade	19	21

Plants for Foliage Display

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Coleus	Stained Glassworks Rose Explosion	shade	27	23
Coleus	Saturn	sun or shade	30	20
Coleus	Sedona	part shade/shade	30	22
Coleus	Versa Lime	sun or shade	24	24
Colocasia	Coffee Cups	sun or shade	52	30
Colocasia	Heart of the Jungle	sun or shade	50	46
Colocasia	Pink China	sun or shade	25	38
Cyperus Papyrus	Baby Tut	sun	32	36
Cyperus Papyrus	King Tut	sun	50	24
Dahlia	Mystic Illusion	sun	30	18
Hibiscus	Maple Sugar	sun	66	30
Ornamental Grass	Carex Toffee Twist	sun	16	15
Ornamental Grass	Juncus Blue Mohawk	sun	25	20
Ornamental Grass	Pennisetum Fireworks	sun	40	30
Ornamental Grass	Pennisetum Red Riding Hood	sun	38	30
Ornamental Grass	Pennisetum Rubrum	sun	48	36
Ornamental Grass	Pennisetum White Lancer	sun	55	60
Ornamental Grass	Pennisetum Vertigo	sun	50	55
Ornamental Millet	Jade Princess	sun	36	25
Ornamental Millet	Jester	sun	52	24
Ornamental Millet	Purple Majesty	sun	48	28
Ornamental Pepper	Black Pearl	sun	28	16
Ornamental Pepper	Calico	sun	19	15
Ornamental Pepper	Chilly Chili (Red/Yellow)	sun	14	17
Ornamental Pepper	Explosive Ember	sun	15	16
Ornamental Pepper	Medusa	sun	7	6
Ornamental Pepper	Purple Flash	sun	24	18
Perilla	Magilla (Purple/Pink)	sun	30	20
Plectranthus	Silver Shield	sun	30	20
Sedum	Lemon Coral	sun	5	20
Sweet Potato (Ipomoea)	Ace of Spades	sun	10	48
Sweet Potato (Ipomoea)	Blackie	sun	10	54
Sweet Potato (Ipomoea)	Chillin Series (All Colors)	sun	15	46
Sweet Potato (Ipomoea)	Illusion Series (All Colors)	sun	16	48
Sweet Potato (Ipomoea)	Marguerite	sun	8	54
Sweet Potato (Ipomoea)	Sidekick Series (All Colors)	sun	15	46
Sweet Potato (Ipomoea)	Sweet Caroline Series (All Colors)	sun	15	52
Sweet Potato (Ipomoea)	Tri Color	sun	6	36
Talinum	Limon	sun	36	32

Plants for Container Gardens*

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Alternanthera	Royal Tapestry	sun / part sun	13	40
Begonia	Sparkle Scarlet	sun or shade	12	22
Calibrachoa	Noa Mega Pink	sun	7	20
Calibrachoa	Superbells Blue	sun	12	28
Calibrachoa	Superbells Cherry Red	sun	7	12

Plants for Container Gardens*

Flower	Cultivar/Color	Planting Location	Height (in)	Width (in)
Calibrachoa	Superbells Coralberry Punch	sun	9	15
Calibrachoa	Superbells Lavender	sun	7	26
Calibrachoa	Superbells Pink	sun	8	14
Calibrachoa	Superbells Red	sun	8	28
Calibrachoa	Superbells Saffron	sun	8	30
Calibrachoa	Superbells Yellow	sun	10	30
Calibrachoa	Superbells Yellow Chiffon	sun	7	26
Coleus	Kong Salmon Pink	shade	22	15
Coleus	Versa Burgundy to Green	sun or shade	22	28
Coleus	Versa Crimson Gold	sun or shade	18	14
Coleus	Wizard Golden	shade	17	16
Coleus	Wizard Scarlet	shade	20	14
Dichondra	Silver Falls	sun	3	28
Gerbera	Garvinea Orangina	sun	14	14
Mandevilla	SunParasol Crimson	sun	15	8
Mandevilla	SunParasol Giant Crimson	sun	38	8
Mandevilla	SunParasol Giant White	sun	40	9
Pentas	Kaleidoscope Pink	sun	14	12
Petunia	Soleil Purple	sun	10	32
Petunia	Sophistica Lime Bicolor	sun	8	18
Petunia	Supertunia Pretty Much Picasso	sun	9	20
Phlox	Intensia Cabernet	sun	8	18
Phlox	Intensia Lavender Glow	sun	10	20
Phlox	Intensia Pink	sun	9	20
Plectranthus	Silver Crest	sun	8	30

*All Prairie Star Flowers are recommended for use in both containers and landscape plantings. The plants in this category displayed exemplary performances in container trials, but some do not grow well when planted in the flower bed.

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