

VT Spirit Daylily Release

January 1, 2011

Beautiful Gardens Plant Introduction Program

The Beautiful Gardens Plant Introduction Program is proud to announce the release of its first new plant, the VT Spirit daylily. VT Spirit is named for Virginia Tech and is a wonderful representation of the school colors of maroon and orange. It is hardy in all Virginia growing zones and boasts a longer than average bloom season for daylilies. This plant was bred by Virginia Tech graduate Linda Pinkham and donated to the Beautiful Gardens program for evaluation and introduction. The VT Spirit daylily is available from Brent & Becky's Bulbs in Gloucester, VA and can be purchased on line or through their catalog. We suggest that you order this spring while supplies last.

Beautiful Gardens was initiated in 2004 as a project of the Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association to find, develop and introduce exciting new ornamental plants to the public and stimulate expanded production and profits for Virginia growers. A committee representing all facets of the Virginia horticulture industry was formed to guide and participate in the set up and running of the Beautiful Gardens program. Plants were selected for review at evaluation sites strategically located in the different climatic areas of Virginia. Plants are reviewed for several years and analyzed for hardiness to heat and cold, resistance to insects, susceptibility to disease and their visual appeal – beauty. Plants passing these tests are then propagated by tissue culture or traditional methods of vegetative or seed reproduction. When the appropriate method has been selected and it is found that the plant can be reproduced in a timely and economic manner the committee selects that plant for commercial production by a Virginia grower or growers.

Beautiful Gardens program partners include: Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association, Virginia Tech Department of Horticulture, Virginia Department of Agriculture and consumer Services, Virginia Cooperative Extension – Master Gardener Program, Institute for Sustainable and Renewable Resources, Claytor Nature Center of Lynchburg College, Norfolk Botanical Gardens, J.Sargeant Reynolds CC and the support of numerous individuals active in the Virginia horticulture industry. Each has played an important role in creating the research, administration and marketing functions of this business entity. New plants scheduled for introduction over the next several years include azaleas, hellaboeres, daylilies and more. A listing of 'plants of distinction' - plants of real value in the Virginia garden but not well known – can be found on the Beautiful Gardens website at www.beautifulgardens.org.

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