

## **2008 All-American Selections**

When purchasing an All-American Selection winner, you are purchasing a plant that has been rated superior by almost 200 independent trial gardens across the United States. Winners are tested for several years before selection, resulting in “tried and true” plants with a history of excellent performance under a multitude of growing conditions. All-American Selections for 2008 include “Asti White” *Osteospermum*, “Skippy XL Plum-Gold” *Viola* and “Hansel” Eggplant. Look for these great plants this winter in seed catalogues and this spring at your local nursery. To see pictures of these great plants, visit the All-American Selections website at <http://www.all-americanselections.org>.

1. **“Asti White” *Osteospermum*** is the first white Cape Daisy propagated from seed, giving homeowners the opportunity to raise their own plants or purchase bedding plants in spring. The flowers remain open under cloudy conditions, unlike other daisy flowers originating from South Africa, which close. Plants flower uniformly about 17 weeks from seed. ‘Asti White’ plants will bloom and recover from a slight frost. These plants can be placed in the spring or fall garden, weeks earlier than other tender annuals. The uniform plants thrive in a sunny garden, reaching about 17 to 20 inches tall and wide. ‘Asti White’ plants adapt perfectly to growing in containers, preferably 6-inch pots or larger.
2. **“Skippy XL Plum-Gold” *Viola*** has uniquely designed flowers with plum shades surrounding the golden center “faces”. The blooms are small, about 1-1/2 inches, but the number of flowers produced more than makes up for the size. In Nebraska plants can be expected to begin blooming in spring up to the hottest parts of summer. The petite plants growing 6 to 8 inches tall and wide are highly recommended for combination planters. Gardeners can rely on ‘Skippy XL Plum-Gold’ to provide abundant blooms whether growing in containers, window boxes, or annual or perennial gardens.
3. **“Hansel” *Eggplant*** is a miniature eggplant with finger-sized clusters of fruit growing on a compact plant, but despite its smaller size, don’t think it produces less fruit. These vigorous plants, reaching less than three feet in height, produce clusters of three to six fruit. They mature early, about 55 days from transplanting into warm soil- about 10 days earlier than similar cultivars. If the 3-inch fruit clusters are left on the plant, they grow in size, but remain tender and non-bitter, unlike other eggplant. This trait offers gardeners flexibility in harvest. ‘Hansel’ is also highly recommended for use in containers, adapting perfectly to container growing conditions. This diminutive plant fits on smaller patios or decks, yet still provides high yields of shiny purple eggplants ready to marinate and grill.