



# Partner with Proven Winners® to Bring Your Breeding Breakthroughs to Market

Years of work, or lucky accident, the discovery of an exciting new or improved variety is every breeder's dream. But once you've found it, then what? For many top breeders, the answer is a call to Proven Winners.



**PW**  
PROVEN  
WINNERS®  
The #1 Plant Brand.™

# What plants are chosen to be Proven Winners?

Simply put, they're plants that make it easy for gardeners to know the joy of gardening because they're tough, reliable, disease resistant, and have an extended season of performance. If that describes your plants, they could be Proven Winners.

## Why should you work with Proven Winners?

- **Because we promote you** – Proven Winners is North America's leading consumer brand of plants, with partners globally to market your plants worldwide.
- **Because we simplify the process for you** – We help you patent your plants and then help you protect them by policing the industry to monitor for patent and trademark infringement. We also have the expertise to streamline the legal process for you.
- **Because we pay millions of dollars in variety license fees** – We have sold over 1.5 billion plants to date, resulting in \$100 million in variety license fees paid to breeders.



SÉNORITA ROSALITA® *Cleome* 'Inncleosr' USPP19733 Can3290  
Bred for us by InnovaPlant, Germany

## How does the Proven Winners partnership work?

The development, trialing, release, marketing, and protection of ornamental plants is a complex, long-term investment. Every breeder needs a partner in the process. Proven Winners takes pride in selling the same great plants for the longest period of time. We are not a plant breeding company, so we have no incentive to shift away from a great plant unless there is a clear advance.

### Before your plants go to the market:

We are the partner who can help you identify your plant's strengths and weaknesses. Plus, we can translate the legal process, which will help you determine whether you need a patent or should ask for a voluntary plant variety license fee on a given plant.

### After your plant is on the market:

Proven Winners provides regular promotion both to the industry and to consumers. We also work with patent enforcement worldwide to make sure that our plant breeders are protected. We can help finance your patent and manage your risk.

SUMMERIFIC® 'Summer Storm'  
*Hibiscus* USPP20443 Can4258  
Bred by Walters Gardens, Michigan



FRUIT PUNCH™ 'Coconut Punch'  
*Dianthus* USPP21876  
Bred by Walters  
Gardens, Michigan



## What marketing and promotion assistance can you expect?

**Consumers:** Proven Winners is North America's #1 plant brand, reaching more gardeners than any other plant brand on the market. We use this marketing power to reach more than half-a-billion gardeners annually via:

- National television campaign, print ads in consumer gardening and lifestyle magazines, and 25+ regional radio promotions aimed at specific markets throughout the United States and Canada.
- Video, images, and web information found on our website: [www.provenwinners.com](http://www.provenwinners.com).
- Outdoor Living Extravaganzas, which are day-long consumer gardening events hosted by the Proven Winners team and held across the continent each year.
- Partnerships with gardening personalities like P. Allen Smith and Jamie Durie.
- Active promotions on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.
- Our consumer publications: the *Gardener's Idea Book*, delivered to 600,000 home gardeners annually, and *Proven Beauty*.
- Proven Winners online plant sales.

**Within the Industry:** Proven Winners plants are sold by all major horticultural brokers. We sell rooted liners and unrooted cuttings to growers in every state and Canada. We want a great plant, and we have sold 1.5 billion plants to date, resulting in \$100 million in variety license fees paid to breeders. Our commitment to promoting our plants within the industry includes \$250,000 in annual spending on trade advertising.

**Growers:** We educate growers about how to succeed in growing our plants through:

- Major industry events like the California spring trials and the Ohio Florist Association's short course.



- Industry open houses with our partners.
- Roadshows, which are grower-focused, day-long, educational programs held each year across the United States and Canada.
- An exhaustive portfolio of online crop culture and growing tips.

**Retailers:** We provide both plant and marketing resources for retail garden centers through:

- The Certified Garden Center program, which trains retailers about the plants we sell and our commitment to always be looking for the best new plants.
- Our plant photo library, which provides a free resource for retailers, garden writers, and bloggers.
- Point-of-purchase materials to display at retail as a way to reinforce the Proven Winners message for consumers.

**Public Trials:** We're serious about growing the best plants and we make sure the industry knows our plants by:

- Sending them to 350 North American garden writers and bloggers each year for free.
- Trialing them at over 30 national public trials and gardens.

**International Releases:** For interested breeders, we can provide connections with our international partners in Europe, Japan, South Africa, and Australia to sell and protect your plant globally.

To learn more, visit our plant breeder website:  
[www.provenwinners.com/professionals/breeders](http://www.provenwinners.com/professionals/breeders)

Check out NAPB, the website for Plant Breeders in the United States: [www.plantbreeding.org/napb](http://www.plantbreeding.org/napb)

Visit CIOPORA, the website devoted to international plant breeder's rights: [www.ciopora.org](http://www.ciopora.org)



SUPERTUNIA® Royal Velvet  
*Petunia* 'Kakegawa S28' USPP13887 Can1039  
over 12 years on the market  
and over 38 million plants sold.  
Bred for us by Sakata Seed, Japan.

# The Q&A on Breeding

## **Q: What is the biggest mistake a breeder can make?**

**A:** Most amateur plant breeders give their plants away to friends or local nurseries because they are proud of the plant. This is actually one of the worst things you can do if you want to have the plant patented. Once you have given the plant away or sold it, you are likely to also have rendered the plant unpatentable. A strong partner can help you avoid this pitfall.

## **Q: How long does the process take?**

**A:** The average time it takes from the time we receive a plant into trial until its release on the market is about 2 to 4 years, so you need to set realistic expectations. Don't go into this process expecting quick cash; you will only be disappointed. A good partner will give you the expected timelines for introduction, keep you informed about all the steps along the way, explain what is and isn't of value in the industry, and provide the marketing and promotion for the success of a new crop.

## **Q: What are the types of plant breeding and selection?**

**A:** Breeding, random chance, sports, and mutations all represent patentable options for a new plant, but each also has pros and cons. Again, it is important to know the meaning of these terms and have a trusted partner to help you decide how to proceed.

## **Q: What is a breeder's agent and do I need one?**

**A:** In the release process, every connection you make has value. This industry is a small one, and everyone knows one another at some level. While an agent is not required to bring a plant to market, at Proven Winners the connections we have and the expertise we offer as an agent are of great value to breeders.

## **Q: What is involved with a trial agreement and who should I trial with?**

**A:** As the owner of your hybrid, you can trial with anyone, with one company or several. However, any trial requires a trial agreement. This is a relatively simple document that states that you are the owner of this plant, that you retain all rights to the plant, that no breeding with or mutating with your plant is allowed, and that the plants must either be returned to you or destroyed at the end of the trial. Most trial agreements last two years. Our experience in this area can be an asset as you navigate this process.

## **Q: How do I know if I want to patent or trademark my plant?**

**A:** Legally, you need a patent for protecting the plant and a trademark for protecting a marketing name. A trademark will not protect a plant's genetics; it protects only the name it is sold under. Ideally, we apply for the plant patent under the breeder's name and the trademark would be owned by Proven Winners.

ILLUSION® Emerald Lace *Ipomoea* <sup>NCORNSP012EMLC</sup> USPP21744 Can416Z

ILLUSION® Midnight Lace *Ipomoea* <sup>NCORNSP011MNLCL</sup> USPP21743 Can416I

ILLUSION® Garnet Lace *Ipomoea* <sup>NCORNSP013GNLCL</sup> USPPAF CanPBRAF

bred for us by the breeding programs of  
North Carolina State University, USA





**Q: What is a variety license fee?**

**A:** A variety license fee is essentially an agreed-upon amount that is paid back to the plant breeder or plant finder for every plant sold. The amount of the variety license fee varies by the kind of plant sold and by whether the plant is an annual, perennial, or woody ornamental. All variety license fees are negotiated before the plant goes to market.

**Q: How can I learn more?**

**A:** The most important thing is to be proactive. Talk to other plant breeders and see what they have learned. Contact different plant breeder agents and have them explain how they work. You can also contact other large companies in horticulture and learn how they work with plant breeders.

To learn more about how Proven Winners works with plant breeders, and how our partnership can benefit you, contact:

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The #1 Plant Brand.\*

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SUPERBELLS® Lemon Slice  
*Calibrachoa* "USCAL5302M" USPPAF CanPBRAF  
brought to us by Plant21, Japan

