



A MASTER GARDENER'S FAVORITE PEPPERS

By Gene Speller

Galveston County Master Gardeners

There's more to life than green bell peppers. Red, orange, and yellow have more nutritional value (Vitamins A & C + beta carotene other anti-oxidants) and are more flavorful than plain-Jane green bell peppers. Peppers with a little heat (based on capsaicin content) provide the spice in life. These below -- valued for ornamental appeal as well as food value -- were photographed in my home garden in the years listed:

SWEET PEPPERS



RED KNIGHT

(Capsicum annuum, F1 Hybrid, USA)

Decorative bright red fruit in garden. Sweet eaten raw or sautéed. Disease resistant. Maturity: 68 days to green, 78 days to red. Fruit size: 4.5" L x W. Plant size: 3' T x 2' W. (May 2011)



ORANGE BLAZE

(Capsicum annuum, F1 Hybrid, USA)

Decorative bright orange fruit. Sweet eaten raw or sautéed. Disease resistant. Maturity: 65 days to green, 75 days to orange. Fruit: 3-4" L x 2" W. Plant: 3' T x 2' W. (June 2014).



GIANT MARCONI

(Capsicum annuum, F1 Hybrid, Italy) Large, elongated sweet pepper with Lobes ~ 8" long.

Plant: 4' T x 3' W. Ripens to red. Sweet. Great grilled or raw. Maturity: 63 days to green, ~ 73 days to red.



Left, above: Speller home garden harvest June 2015. Right above: Speller home garden Spring, 2010.

MILD PEPPER

[Scoville Heat Units (SHU): 500 to 1000]

SAHUARO

(*Capsicum annuum*, F1 Hybrid, USA)

A newer/improved version of other popular green chiles (aka "Hatch", Anaheim, or Big Chili II). Stronger, more productive, disease resistant. Fruit up to 9" long. Plant 3 to 4' T x 2.5' W. Pungency ~ 500 SHU. Great for grilling or sautéing. Maturity ~ 68 days to green, 78 days to red. (Photo: Speller home garden June 2011).



HOT PEPPERS

(SHU: 5,000 to 100,000)



JAPANESE HONTAKA

(*Capsicum annuum*, OP, Japan)

A very attractive and productive hot (SHU: 35,000) chile. Very popular in Japan and in Asian cuisine. Great for dry grinding processing. Maturity: 80 days (red). Peppers: 0.25" W x 4" L. Plant: 2' W x 3' T. (July 2014)

NUMEX TWILIGHT

(*Capsicum annuum*, OP, USA)

Yellow, purple, orange & red all four at once — attractive ornamental Chile Piquin-type pepper.



Peppers: 0.25" W x 0.7 L. Plant: 4' T x 3.5' W. Great in pepper vinegar. (Closeup at top of column.) SHU: ~ 50,000. Maturity: 120 days. (photo: 10/28/19).