



Agricultural Systems

PHOTO: USDA

New varieties give growers competitive edge

Land-grant universities are breeding plant varieties that are hardier, thwart diseases and offer unique qualities. The new varieties give growers options that are better suited to local growing conditions and consumers get more choices.

Successful examples include:

- Researchers have developed cold-hardy grape cultivars and optimum processing methods for **Minnesota** growers and winemakers to produce high-quality wine.
- Peanut breeders in **Georgia** collaborated with others in the United States, Brazil, Senegal and Uganda. Six new peanut varieties have been released in Senegal and three in Brazil to reduce farmer costs, increase yield, reduce fuel use and lower the environmental impact of farming.
- Soybeans developed by **Iowa** researchers to resist sudden death syndrome also show immunity against soybean cyst nematode, spider mites and soybean aphids.
- **Oregon** researchers identified the most suitable quinoa varieties to grow in the state's Willamette Valley. The new rotation crop provides consumers a local source for the mostly imported, gluten-free rice substitute.
- **New Mexico** researchers have identified genes that convey resistance to the chile wilt pathogen.

Nurseries grow more profitable with new plant choices

*The University of **Georgia** has released 23 new ornamental plant cultivars. Bringing new cultivars to market increases the profitability and productivity of the ornamental horticulture industry. Two successful plant brands started from this research are the Aim High™ Hollies and Head Over Heels® Hibiscus. Of the cultivars currently on the market, estimated sales in 2020 were over 250,000 units. This ornamental plant breeding program has had an economic impact of over \$18 million for the ornamental horticulture industry—wholesale, retail and landscape.*

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