



Pepper Production Guide for Florida: Varieties¹

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There are two basic types of peppers: mild-fleshed and pungent-fleshed. Within each category, there is a wide range in fruit sizes, shapes, and colors. The more popular specialty types include the cayenne, jalapeno, and cubanelle peppers.

Variety selection, several months before planting, is one of the most important management decisions made by the grower. Failure to select the most suitable variety may lead to loss of yield or market acceptability.

The following characteristics should be considered in selection of pepper varieties for use in Florida. Varieties possessing these characteristics are listed in Table 1 as recommended cultivars.

Characteristics

Yield. The variety selected should have the potential to produce yields at least equivalent to cultivars already grown. The average harvested yield in Florida is currently about 1000 bushels per acre. The potential yield of varieties in use should be considerably higher than the average yield, or have other desirable yield characteristics such as earlier harvests.

Disease Tolerance. Most pepper varieties in use in Florida are tolerant to some strains of tobacco mosaic virus. Tolerance to other viruses is available, but these varieties are not generally horticulturally acceptable. Bacterial spot tolerance is available in some varieties, and these varieties may be especially useful for fall production.

Horticultural Quality. Plant habit and cover and fruit size, shape, color, wall thickness, and number of lobes should all be considered in variety selection.

Adaptability. Successful pepper varieties must perform well under the range of environmental conditions usually encountered in the district or on the individual farm.

Market Acceptability. The pepper produced must have characteristics acceptable to the packer, shipper, wholesaler, retailer, and consumer. Included among these qualities are pack out, fruit shape, fruit color, and flavor.

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Table 1. Disease tolerance of pepper varieties for commercial production.¹

Varieties	Bacterial Spot Race			Potato Virus Y	Tobacco Etch Virus	Common Strains of Tobacco Mosaic Virus
	1	2	3			
Bell:						
Boynton Bell (H)	+	+	+	0	0	0
X3R Camelot (H)	+	+	+	-	-	+
Capistrano	-	-	-	-	-	+
Enterprise (H)	+	+	+	0	0	+
Jupiter	-	-	-	-	-	+
King Arthur (H)	-	+	-	+	-	+
X3R Lancelot (for fall planting)	+	+	+	+	-	+
Summer Sweet 860 (H)	-	-	-	+	-	+
Valiant (H)	-	-	-	-	-	+
Specialty						
Cubanelle:						
Biscayne (H)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Key Largo (H)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pungent:						
Large Red Thick Cayenne	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mitla (H)	-	-	-	-	-	-
TAM Vera Cruz	-	-	-	+	+	-

¹Tolerant (+), not tolerant (-), unknown (0).