TRIAL GARDEN Winners

After surviving sun, drought, and gully washers, these plants are ready for even the brownest thumbs in Dallas.

This year’s trial garden at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden yielded beautiful, hearty specimens uniquely suited for the local climate. The experimental garden, which subjects each plant to two seasons of testing, is the collaboration of horticulturists at the Arboretum and Texas A&M University. The plants aren’t pampered with daily maintenance, and they don’t receive anything but the most basic care to ensure they’ll thrive in even a novice’s yard.

“If you can garden in Dallas, you can garden anywhere,” says Dallas Arboretum Director of Horticulture Research Jimmy Turner. “One day you’re deluged with rain; the next it is 104 degrees, and the sun is beating down. Plants have to be tough here. This is the whole purpose of our trial program: Find the plants that do well here and promote them.”

Calloway’s Nursery has collaborated with the Arboretum since opening in 1987, but this is the first year they will carry plants from the trial garden. The nursery will be stocking 75 different annuals, perennials, shrubs, and roses, all recommended by Turner. Plants from the trial garden will be tagged, so be sure to ask a sales associate to point you in the right direction. Happy planting. — Roger Brooks