



People's Choice winner Sofia® Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus* 'Zsofi' PP33411).

Judges Choice winner Saturnalia™ American hybrid oak (*Quercus* 'HSLMK' PPAF). PHOTO COURTESY OF HERITAGE SEEDLINGS AND LINERS

Sofia® Cherry Laurel and Saturnalia™ American hybrid oak shine at New Varieties Showcase

Sofia® Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus* 'Zsofi' PP33411) was voted as the People's Choice Best in Show winner in the 2026 Farwest Show's New Varieties Showcase. Show attendees voted and the winners were announced on the last day of Farwest.

Introduced by Concept Plants and **Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas**, it was one of 26 outstanding new selections at the 2026 Farwest Show.

"Plant breeding and new plant introductions help fuel the nursery industry and drive innovation," said Connie Lindsay, trade show manager for the Oregon Association of Nurseries, which produced the show. "People attending Farwest got to see a tremendous variety of high-quality new introductions. We're thrilled these new plants are entering the market and excited that we have a role in helping make that happen."

According to Concept Plants and Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas, "Sofia® Cherry Laurel is a game changer. It's a beautiful, easy-care ornamental cherry that delivers year-round appeal. It features fine-textured, elegant foliage that creates a light, refined look throughout the growing season. Its compact habit makes it perfect for small gardens, patios, entryways, streetscapes, and urban landscapes, where it can be used as a low hedge or a graceful accent in mixed plantings."

"It responds well to pruning and is easy to shape. Combining outstanding ornamental value with improved disease resistance over 'Otto Luyken', *Prunus Sofia* is an ideal choice for homeowners and landscape professionals alike." It matures to 60 inches tall and 40 inches wide. Zones 5a-8b.

In addition to the People's Choice Best of Show award, voters chose three Awards of Merit as follows:



Centennial Ruby™ Hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Hokocentennial' PPAF). PHOTO COURTESY OF MONROVIA NURSERY COMPANY

Centennial Ruby™ Hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Hokocentennial' PPAF), selected from a hydrangea breeding program in the Netherlands, and introduced and submitted by **Monrovia Nursery Company**. According to Monrovia, "A special release to celebrate Monrovia's 100th anniversary, the flowers of this hydrangea are simply stunning. The rich ruby- ➤



Candybox® Chilean Guava. PHOTO COURTESY OF
PROVEN WINNERS® COLORCHOICE® SHRUBS

red mophead blooms deepen in color as the long-lasting flowers age, sometimes taking on almost black hues. Exceptionally sturdy and compact, with strong stems and thick green leaves. Reblooming. Deciduous." Grows to 3 feet wide and tall. Zones 4a–9b.

Candybox® Chilean Guava (*Ugni molinae* 'Pl16' PPAF), hybridized by Viveros Hijuelas de Quillota, Chile and introduced by **Proven Winners® ColorChoice® Shrubs**. According to Proven Winners: "New compact form of Chilean guava that makes an excellent drought-tolerant hedge. Adorned with delicate, silky flowers throughout the plant in summer, the resulting fruit is an explosion of spices and sweetness in autumn. Drought tolerant, evergreen and well-behaved shrub for the landscape and edible gardens." Grows to 2–3 feet wide by 2–3 feet tall. Zones 7a–9b.

DreamScape™ Smooth Hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens* 'BAICZ10' PPAF, CBRAF), introduced by First Editions® Shrubs & Trees and submitted by **Bailey Nurseries**. According to Bailey, "DreamScape™ Smooth Hydrangea represents a major advancement in pink *Hydrangea arborescens*, delivering value for growers, retailers, and landscapers. Bold 8–10-inch mophead flowers open ruby pink and ages to parchment pink, held upright on strong stems that withstand wind and rain. Dark green foliage stays clean in production, on the shelf, and in the landscape. With a uniform, mounded habit at 3–4 feet tall and 4–5 feet wide, DreamScape™ is adaptable



DreamScape™ Smooth Hydrangea. PHOTO
COURTESY OF FIRST EDITIONS® SHRUBS & TREES

to sun or part shade. Bred by Bailey Nurseries, it sets a new standard in the category." Zones 3a–8b.

Earlier in the week, professional judges awarded the New Varieties Showcase Judges Choice awards.

Judges' Best in Show — Saturnalia™ American hybrid oak (*Quercus* 'HSLMK' PPAF), introduced by **Heritage Seedlings & Liners Inc.** A hybrid of Silverleaf (*Q. hypoleucoides*) and Red Oak (*Q. rubra*), it was found among seedlings grown at Heritage Seedlings & Liners. Red-blushed new leaves mature to glossy dark green with acute lobes and thick texture, silvery green beneath. Long lasting fall color is bronze-green to rusty red. Vigorous upright growth, a strong leader, open branch angles and wide adaptability merit its use as an urban tree across the continent. Early trials show it to thrive in the heat and humidity of North Carolina, as well as its first winter at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Grows to 25 feet wide by 40 feet tall. Zones 5b–9b.

In addition to the Best of Show award, judges gave three Awards of Merit:

Lantana Luscious® Vanilla Breeze™ (*Lantana camara* Luscious® Vanilla Breeze™ PPAF), introduced by **Proven Winners® ColorChoice® Shrubs**. According to them, "As beautiful as they are, sometimes bold red or gold lantanas just won't work in some container recipes or landscape designs like those where pastel pinks and blues dominate. That's where the elegant Luscious® Vanilla Breeze™ lantana shines. This lantana's fragrant blossoms open soft, buttery yellow and



Lantana Luscious® Vanilla Breeze™. PHOTO
COURTESY OF PROVEN WINNERS® COLORCHOICE® SHRUBS

mature to white — an essential color that brings balance and refinement. They are produced abundantly all over the large, well-branched, spreading canopy of this large, landscape-sized lantana. Luscious Vanilla Breeze is a heat tolerant lantana that works beautifully in mass landscape plantings and large container recipes, adding a cool splash of white on hot summer days. Like all Proven Winners lantanas, it produces few to no seeds and requires no deadheading to bloom non-stop all season." Height and spread 20–26 inches. Zones 9a–11a.

Sofia® Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus* 'Zsofi' PP33411) — Details above.

Crimson Feathers False Spirea (*Sorbaria sorbifolia* 'Hyfaria' PP36847), introduced by Concept Plants. According to them, "A truly spectacular addition to the *Sorbaria* family, Crimson Feather is a beautiful, compact and extremely hardy shrub that boasts large, feathery golden leaves with new, intense crimson-red growth, creating a beautiful contrast to the mature lime-green leaves. The stunning red color holds into summer and is truly a sight to behold. *Sorbaria* Crimson Feather's new red growth is the brightest in the assortment so far, and as if that's not enough, Crimson Feather is not susceptible to diseases either. A stunning, trouble-free cultivar and deserved winner of Gold at the HTA New Plant Awards 2022. *Sorbaria* Crimson Feather looks beautiful in pots, borders, and Japanese gardens, but it will also make an impressive low hedge that will attract pollinators from far and wide." Height and spread 40 inches. Zones 2a–11a. ©