

## **Oklahoma Proven Selections For 2025**

Spring has officially sprung! Old Man Winter is finally done and now it is time to get growing! *Oklahoma Proven Selections* is a great place to start.

*Oklahoma Proven* is a plant testing and promotion program coordinated by the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture at Oklahoma State University. Since 1999, their goal is to find and test plants that will survive and thrive in Oklahoma. Each year they recommend a tree, a shrub, a perennial and an annual that are well adapted for our often-challenging weather.

2025's *Oklahoma Proven Selections* are the Horstmann Blue Atlas Cedar (tree), the Allspice or Sweetshrub (shrub), Swamp or Narrow-Leaf Sunflower (perennial), and Globe Amaranth (annual).



**Horstmann Blue Atlas Cedar Tree** (*Cedrus Atlantica*) is this year's tree selection. It is a smaller version of the Blue Atlas

Cedar. This evergreen will reach up to 12' high and 8' wide. It will do best in full sun and well-drained soil. It is rated for USDA zones 6–9. This tree is drought hardy once established but it will need regular watering until then. Its size and durability make it an excellent choice for urban landscapes.

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**Allspice or Sweetshrub** (*Calycanthus Floridus*) is this year's shrub selection. It is commonly known as Carolina Allspice or Common Sweetshrub. It is a deciduous native shrub, which can reach a height of 6-12 feet and about the same width. It produces showy spring flowers that smell like pineapple, strawberry, and

banana. They are typically a dark, reddish-brown but they are also available in red, yellow or white flowered varieties. It is native to woodland areas and along stream banks but will do well in full sun or deep shade – in other words, just about anywhere. It is rated for USDA zones 4–9 so it should survive winter well here.

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**Narrow Leaf Sunflower** (*Helianthus Angustifolius*) is the 2025 perennial selection. This native can grow to about 8 feet tall. Prune in June to encourage branching. Staking for extra support is a good idea in windy areas. Shorter cultivar options are

available - First Light or Low Down. Its bird and pollinator attracting flowers bloom late in the season, usually late October through early November when many other flowering plants are done for the year. These sunflowers are a host plant for the Silvery Checkerspot butterfly larvae. The seeds attract doves, quail, and songbirds in the winter. It prefers full sun and moist soil so planting near a stream or rain garden would be ideal. It is rated for USDA zones 5–9.

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The 2025 annual selection is **Globe Amaranth** (*Gomphrena Globosa*). Its beautiful, tough, globe-shaped flower heads bloom all summer long. They are available in a wide variety of colors including pink, red, purple, lilac, violet, orange and white. These

pollinator-attracting flowers do best in the full sun, and they do not mind the summer heat. While they are drought-tolerant, they will perform better with regular watering. Because they retain their color so well, the dried blossoms popular in dried flower arrangements, too. As an annual, these flowers are rated for USDA zones 2-8.

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To learn more about 2025's *Oklahoma Proven* Selections, visit:  
<https://extension.okstate.edu/programs/oklahoma-proven/plant-profiles-by-year/selection-for-2025.html>

You can get answers to all your gardening questions at <https://www.tulsamastergardeners.org/>, or call the Tulsa Master Gardeners Help Line at 918-746-3701, or email us at [mg@tulsamastergardeners.org](mailto:mg@tulsamastergardeners.org), or come see us at our Diagnostic Center at 4116 E 15<sup>th</sup> St., Tulsa, OK.