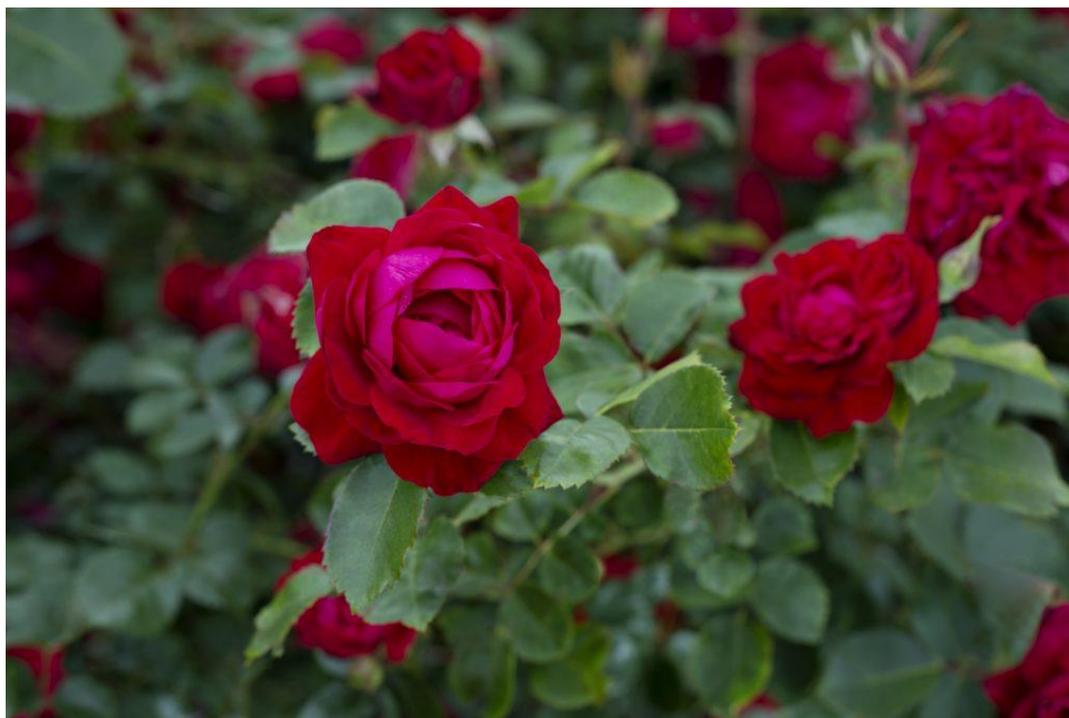


Canadian Shield first in new series of easy-to-grow roses

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Canadian Shield, a vivid red landscape rose with glossy green foliage, is the first in a new series of easy-to-grow roses called the 49th Parallel Collection being developed at Vineland Research and Innovation Centre in Ontario. Introduced last year, Canadian Shield (*Rosa* 'AAC576') is a mildly fragrant floribunda with large double flowers — 42 to 52 petals per bloom — averaging three inches (8 cm) wide. Plants can grow to five by four feet (150 x 120 cm). It's a repeat bloomer, the result of a cross that includes 'Frontenac', a rose in the Explorer Series, an earlier series of Canadian-bred roses.

The research centre's rose breeding program was started in 2010 in partnership with the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association ([CNLA](#)).

Garden Making asked Amy Bowen, Research Director of [Vineland](#), to tell us more about Canadian Shield along with upcoming roses in the collection gardeners can look forward to.

How is Canadian Shield different from red roses in other Canadian-bred series?

Canadian Shield is bred to be winter hardy to Zone 3 (-40°C), meaning that it will survive across Canada during harsh winters; it's also resistant to black spot. The rose is also highly ornamental with its upright growth habit, dark green glossy foliage and stunning red blossoms that bloom from summer to fall.

Where will Canadian Shield be for sale this spring and summer?

Canadian Shield will be available for sale through our licensees, nurseries and garden centres across the country. Green thumbs can go to "Where to Buy" at 49throses.com to find out where to buy our made-in-Canada rose.



The process of developing a new rose such as Canadian Shield can take up to 10 years.

How many years of testing, such as growing in settings that replicate a garden, do new roses receive before being introduced to the market?

A rose is evaluated for two years at Vineland Research and Innovation Centre in Vineland, Ontario. If it exhibits exceptional agronomic performance, it is sent for pan-Canadian testing. Pan-Canadian testing involves sending the rose to commercial partners in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick for evaluation under their specific growing conditions. The roses are evaluated for two years and our partners provide feedback on winter hardiness, disease susceptibility and ornamental value. From there, the top roses are selected for commercialization. The process can take almost 10 years – six years of field evaluation and another three and half years to propagate and scale up plants for sale.

Chinook Sunrise is next in the series. How many more introductions are planned? Anything in particular breeders are aiming for?

Our goal is to build Vineland's 49th Parallel Collection of roses to include five to seven. The roses are selected on three main criteria: winter hardiness (to Zone 3), disease-resistance to black spot and consumer appeal. Chinook Sunrise, with exotic coral buds fading to pink blooms, will be released in 2019. Aurora Borealis, a beautiful sunset-pink rose, has been selected for 2021. In 2022, the hope is to release a new rose every year to fill the collection.

Roses will be retired and new roses introduced as our breeding program evolves. The breeding program will continue to select roses for cold hardiness, disease resistance and consumer traits related to ornamental value (such as unique colours, fragrance, bloom size and coverage). We want our roses to meet the needs of all levels of gardeners. All the roses in Vineland's 49th Parallel Collection bloom continuously and self-deadhead.

Canadian Shield is described as having a "mild fragrance." Most of the modern, Canadian-bred roses have mild (or no) fragrance. Do you foresee this as being a trait that breeders will be looking for in future introductions?

Through consumer research, we've identified that fragrance is something consumers are looking for in landscape roses. The hope is to identify roses that have mild fragrance, but not compromise our main differentiators of cold hardiness, disease resistance and consumer appeal. It is something our breeding team monitors throughout the process, but is not a main focus at this point.

How are the roses' names chosen?

The names are chosen through extensive consumer research. Through both online and in-person evaluations, we ask consumers to provide us with names of great Canadian natural phenomena that could work for a rose. We then pick several names that we think might best suit the features of the particular rose. Following this, consumers look at images of the rose and tell us which name best represents the roses. The stunning red bloom of Canadian Shield linked well to the Canadian identity and was released in time for Canada's 150th birthday. The softness of the waves of colour of Chinook Sunrise made consumers think of the warm winds of a Prairie chinook. The beautiful pink flowers of Aurora Borealis remind consumers of the brilliant pink seen in the Northern Lights.

Some people see all roses as high-maintenance plants. How do you allay or dispel those fears?

A key feature of our roses is that they are low maintenance and can be successfully grown by novice gardeners. We dispel these myths through information on the plant tag and gardening tips posted under the "How to Grow" section on 49throses.com.

What is your background in the world of roses? Do you grow roses in your own garden?

I've been involved with the Canadian hardy rose program at Vineland since 2013. My team has lead the consumer research to identify what consumers want in landscape roses to help select the top selections. We also worked closely with our marketing team on the creation and promotion of Vineland's 49th Parallel Collection. I do have a small rose garden at home which proudly contains a Canadian Shield rose and I have reserved spots for the next two roses from Vineland's 49th Parallel Collection.

(Interview has been edited and condensed.)

For more information
Vineland's 49th Parallel Collection website



<https://gardenmaking.com/canadian-shield-first-easy-grow-roses/>