

MEDIA RELEASE



Ridgetown College Professor Author of New Gardening Guide

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Should you plant daisies or daffodils? Hostas or holly? Plant selection and care just became a lot easier for home gardeners.

Steve Loewen, an experienced horticulture instructor at the University of Guelph Ridgetown Campus, is the co-author and editor of **PlantSwatch**, a new tool to help people find the best plants for their gardens. Featuring beautiful colour images of over 230 classic plants and flowers, PlantSwatch looks much like the fan-out colour books used by home decorators. The guide is arranged by flower colour and foliage plus the Plant Hardiness Zones for optimal results. The back of each plant image includes the information essential to the plant's growth.

Loewen has been teaching horticulture, with a focus on plant identification courses at Ridgetown for 20 years. He is very well respected by horticulture diploma students for his plant identification knowledge and his enthusiasm for garden plants of all kinds. "I have been gardening ever since I was old enough to plant sunflower, bean and sweet corn seeds, says Loewen, and I enjoy sharing my practical gardening knowledge with our horticulture students."

When choosing which plants to include in PlantSwatch, Loewen and Phillip Fourie, his co-author, tried to select those that might be called 'classic garden plants'. "These are plants that have withstood the test of time in gardens and are reasonably easy to grow over a wide range of conditions," Loewen says. Some relatively new plants were also included; as they are already showing promise to become future classics. All of the featured plants should be reasonably easy to find in garden centres or from mail order nurseries.

PlantSwatch is now available on-line at www.plantswatch.com.

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