

Strengthening Organic Farming Infrastructure through Consumer Education, Market Development, and Integrated Extension and Research Programs in the Southeastern Region



TUSKEGEE
UNIVERSITY



Project Team

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Project Team (Cont'd)

- Jeanine Davis, NC State
- Casey Barickman, Mississippi State
- Alice Evans, ASAN
- Karen Wynne, Crotoovina farm
- Brittney Goodrich, Auburn Univ.
- Alice Formiga, Oregon State Univ.

Purpose of the meeting

To bring our team partners and board members together to critically examine results of activities obtained during the year 2018 and make suggestions on how to improve.



Project Goal

To facilitate development of a strong and vibrant organic farming industry in the SE through consumer education, market development, and effective educational support for growers, extension agents and integrated extension and research programs.



Project Objectives

- To conduct consumer education and marketing research on organic produce focusing on Alabama,
- To provide organic growers with site specific recommendations on selected vegetable crops,
- To develop a participatory extension and evaluation program to support organic food systems, and
- To build a database for organic information for the benefits of organic growers in all regions of the nation.

Our logo

SOUTHEAST
ORGANIC
PARTNERSHIP

AT TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY



Accomplishments

- **Objective 1. Conduct consumer education and marketing research on organic produce focusing on Alabama.**
 - A forum was organized at Tuskegee Univ. Over 100 students attended the forum to learn about organic farming, marketing and economics of organic foods, effects of conventional agriculture on human health and the environment, environmental stewardship, pesticides and their residues in foods and their effects on health.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

- - Developed surveys to obtain information on organic consumers, producers and market intermediaries;
- Finalized producer survey to determine where producers are marketing fruits and vegetables within Alabama and what factors inhibit their ability to become certified organic;
- Communicated with industry stakeholders to determine best avenues to acquire producer and market intermediary survey participation.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

- Objective 2. To provide organic growers with site specific recommendations on selected vegetable crops,
- - We initiated three experiments Tuskegee Univ., North Carolina State Univ., and MS State University and test performance of OMRI-approved organic pesticides against major pests in the southeast;

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

■ Challenges:

weather in SE in 2018:

- Heavy rains caused flooding or delayed crop planting (repeated planting with its effects on crop yields);
- Some growers were discouraged and were not able to plant;

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

- Challenges with data logs by growers:
 - Some growers were not able to return their logs until now;
 - Half of the data logs returned could not be used for yield estimates because growers did not follow instructions to complete them properly.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

- Challenges with growers:

 - Some growers dropped out of the studies

 - Growers' visits:

 - The Tuskegee team visited growers in AL, GA, and TN;
 - Videotaped interviews with growers

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

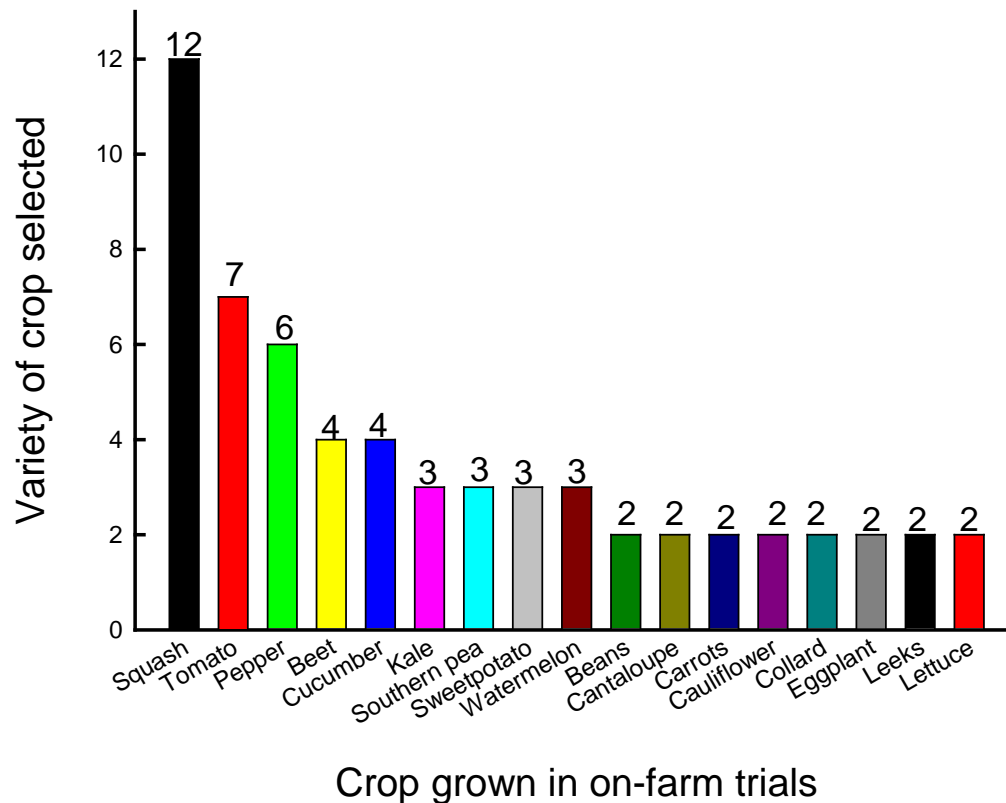
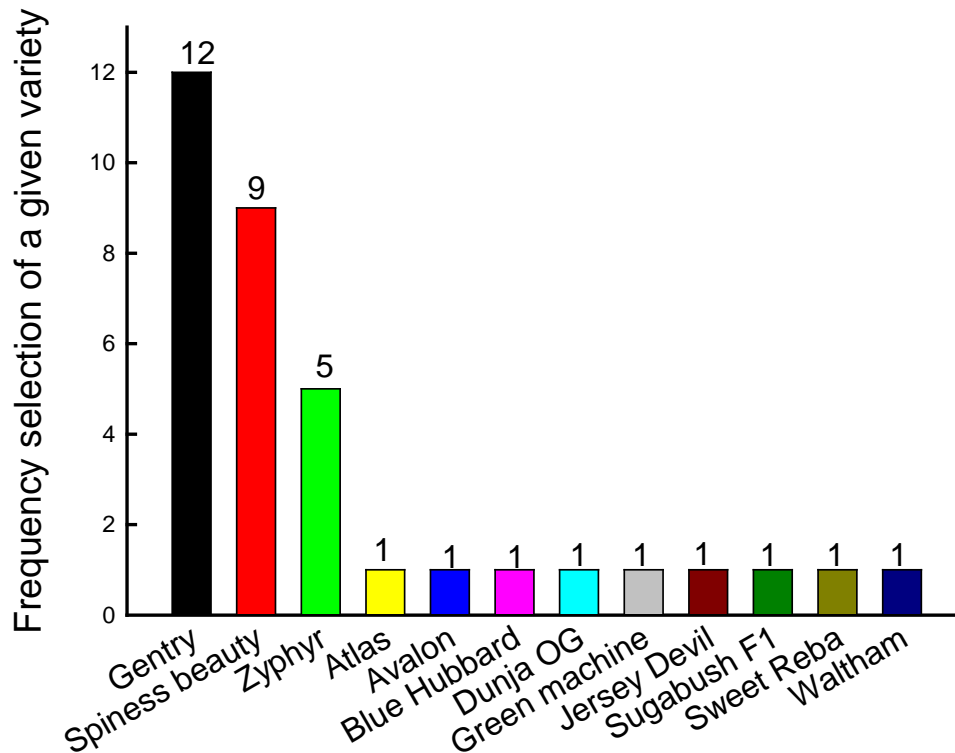


Figure 1. Number of different crop varieties selected for a given crop in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

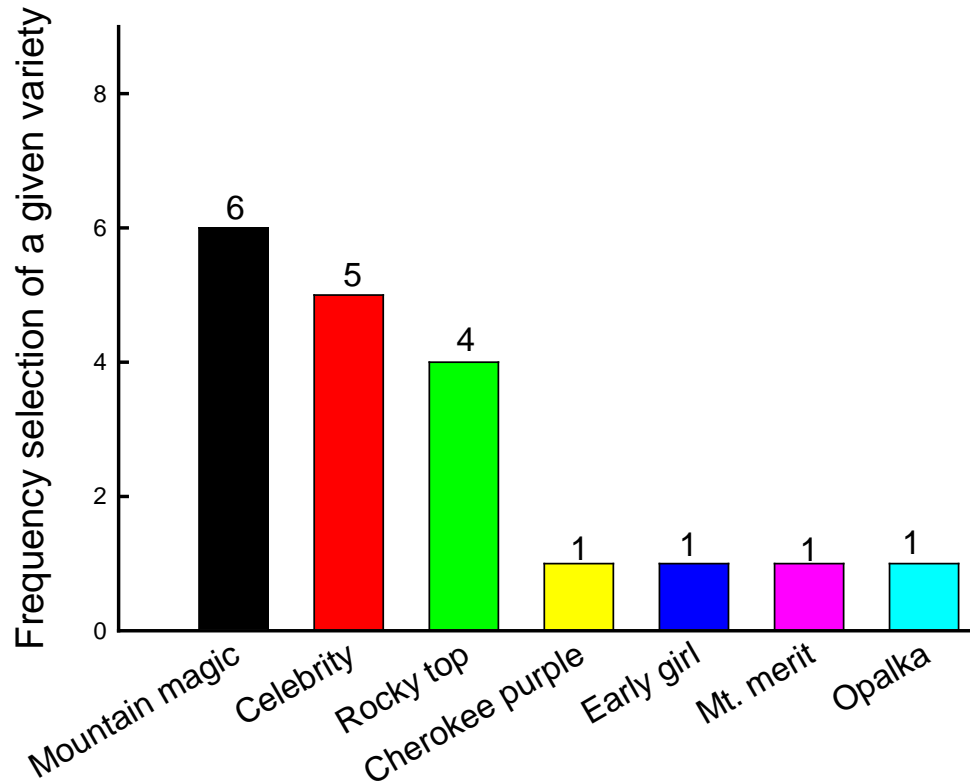


Squash varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 2. Frequency of squash varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.



Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Tomato varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 3. Frequency of tomato varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.



Accomplishments (Cont'd)

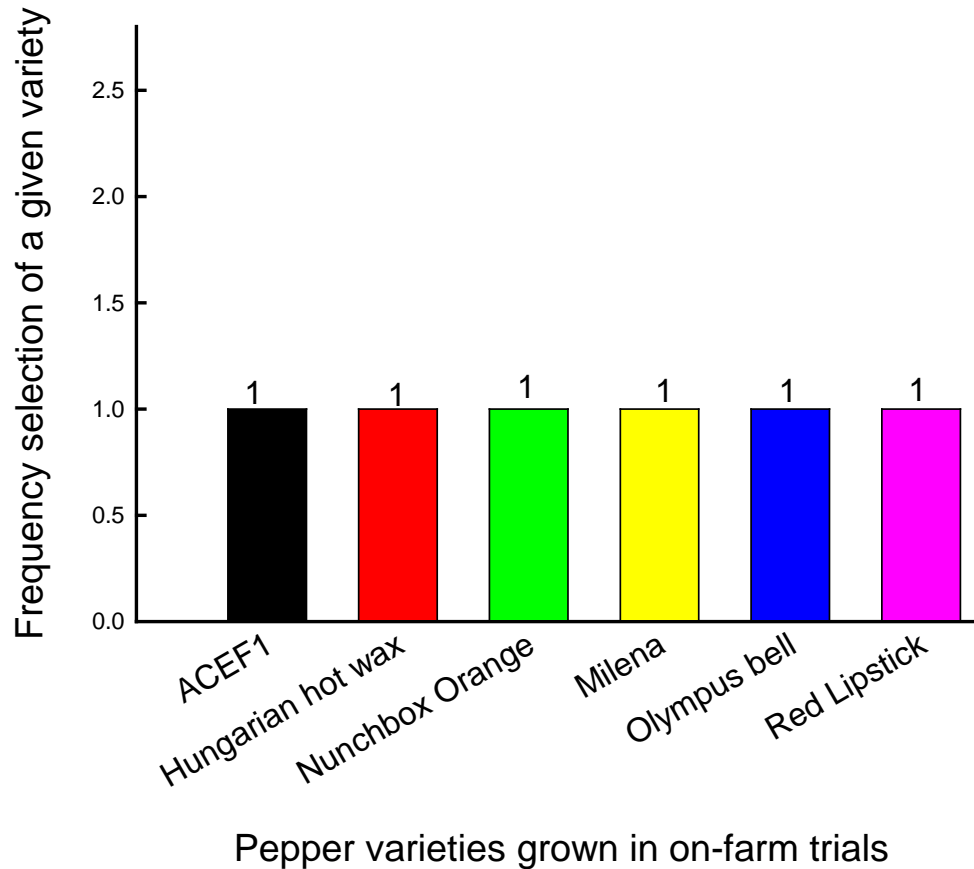
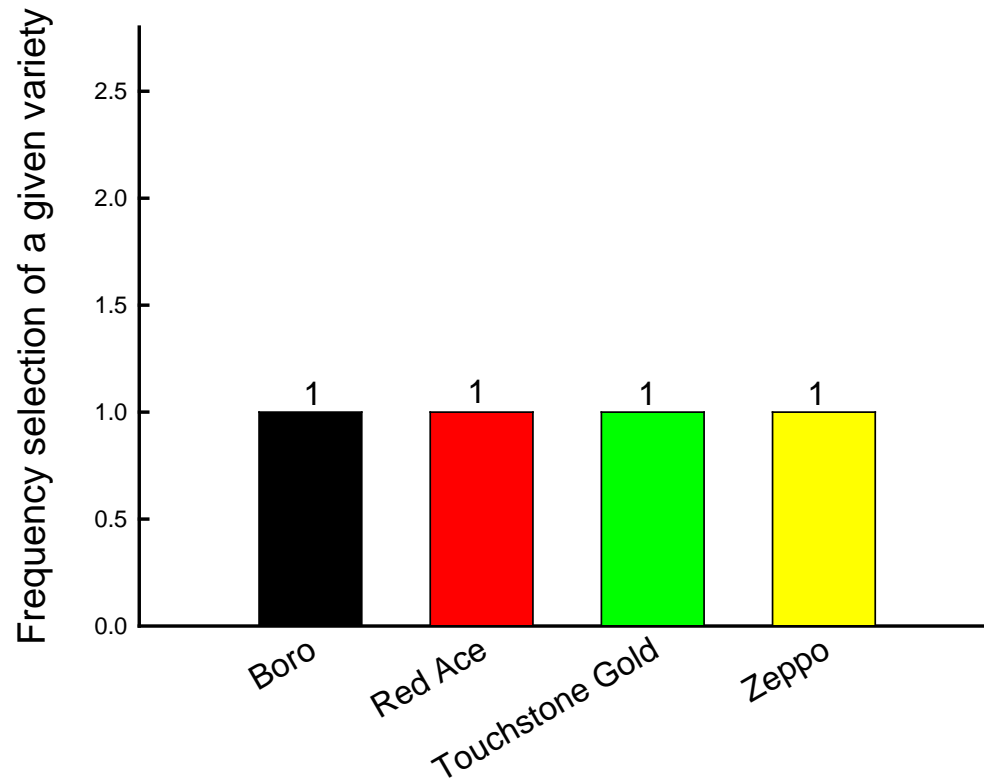


Figure 4. Frequency of pepper varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Beet varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 5. Frequency of beet varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

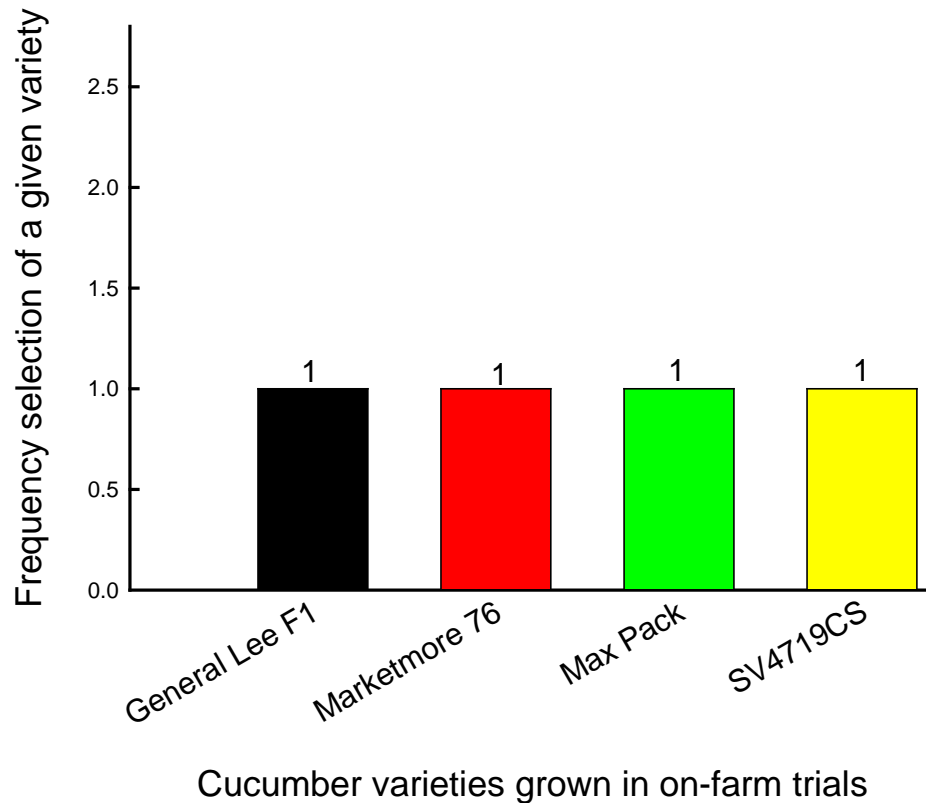


Figure 6. Frequency of cucumber varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.



Accomplishments (Cont'd)

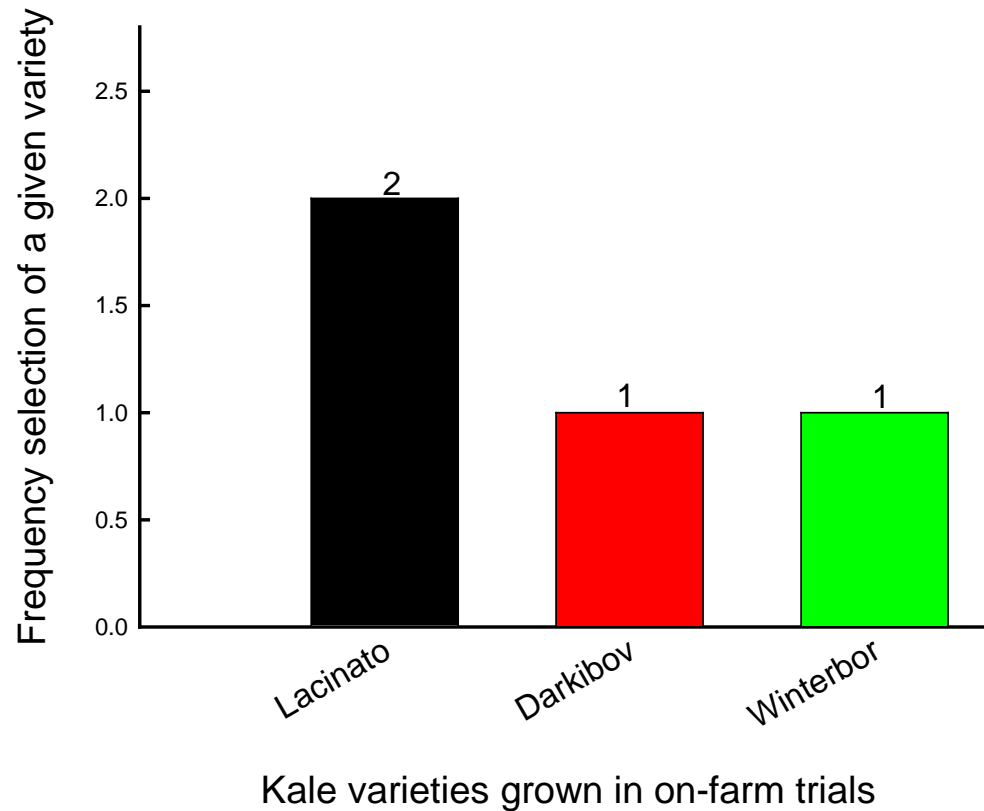
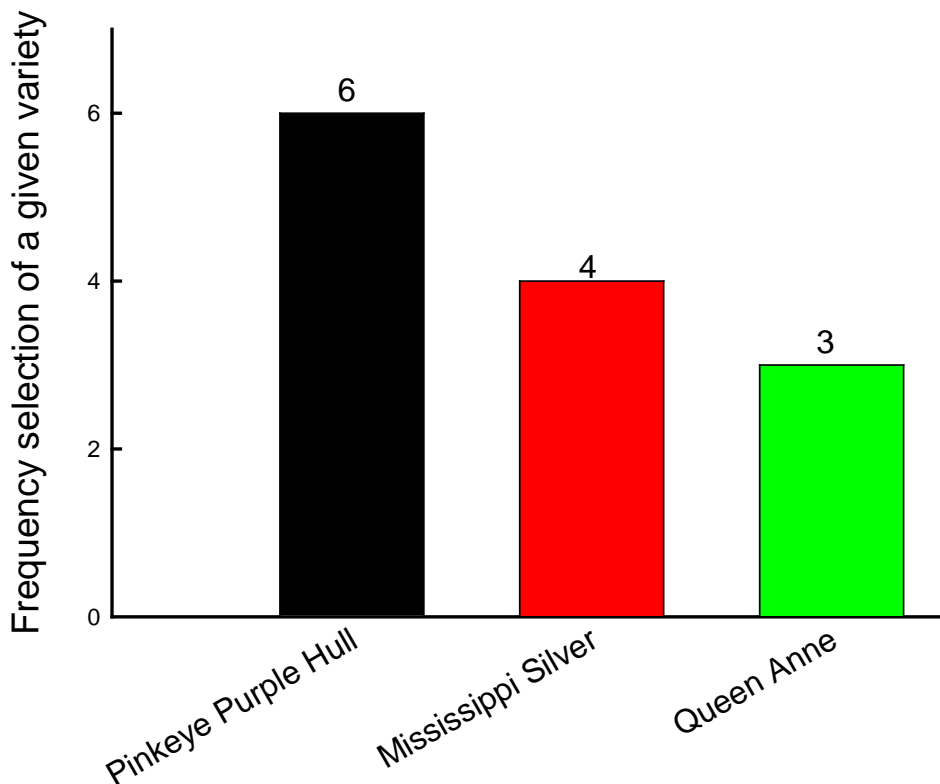


Figure 7. Frequency of kale varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

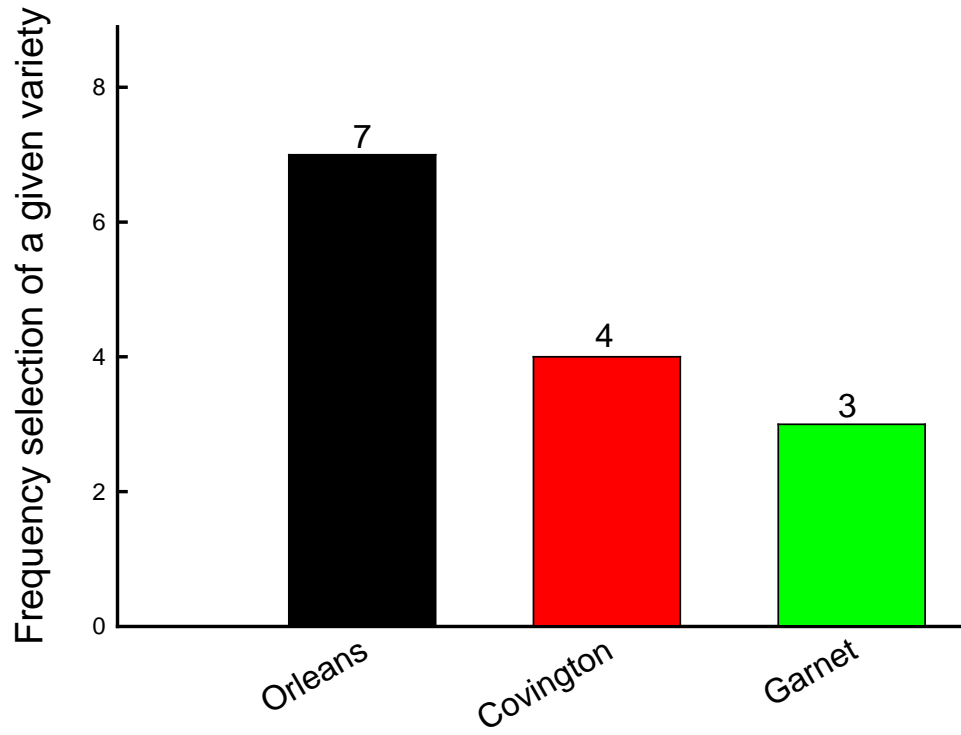
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Southern pea varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 8. Frequency of southern pea varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

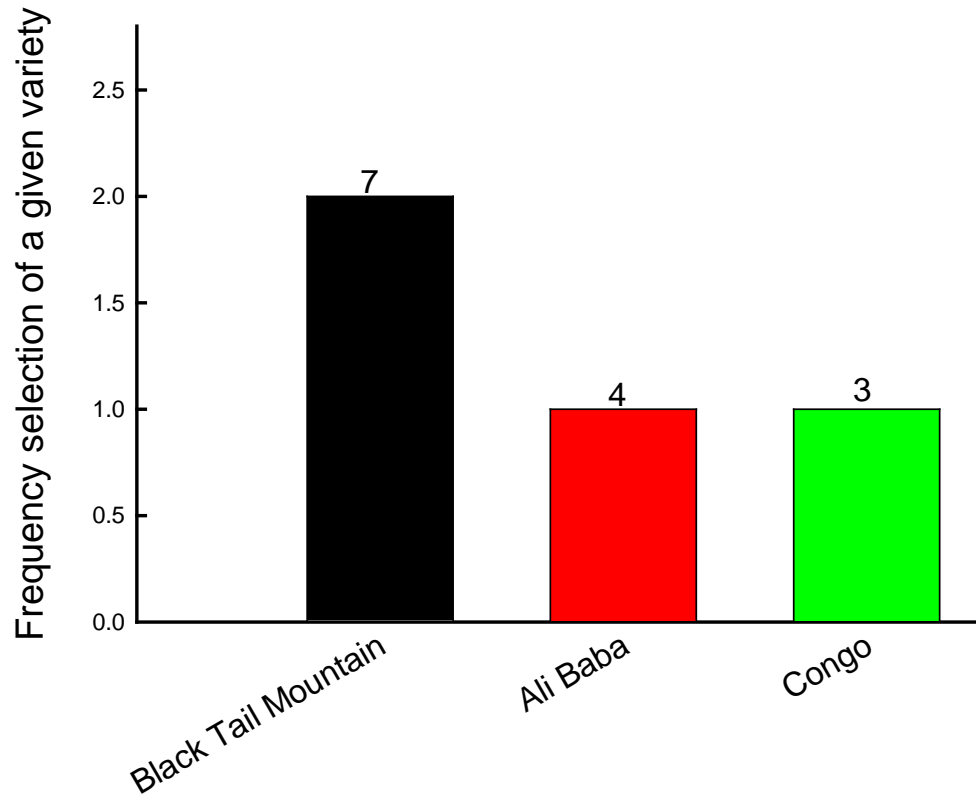
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Sweet potato varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 9. Frequency of sweet potato varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

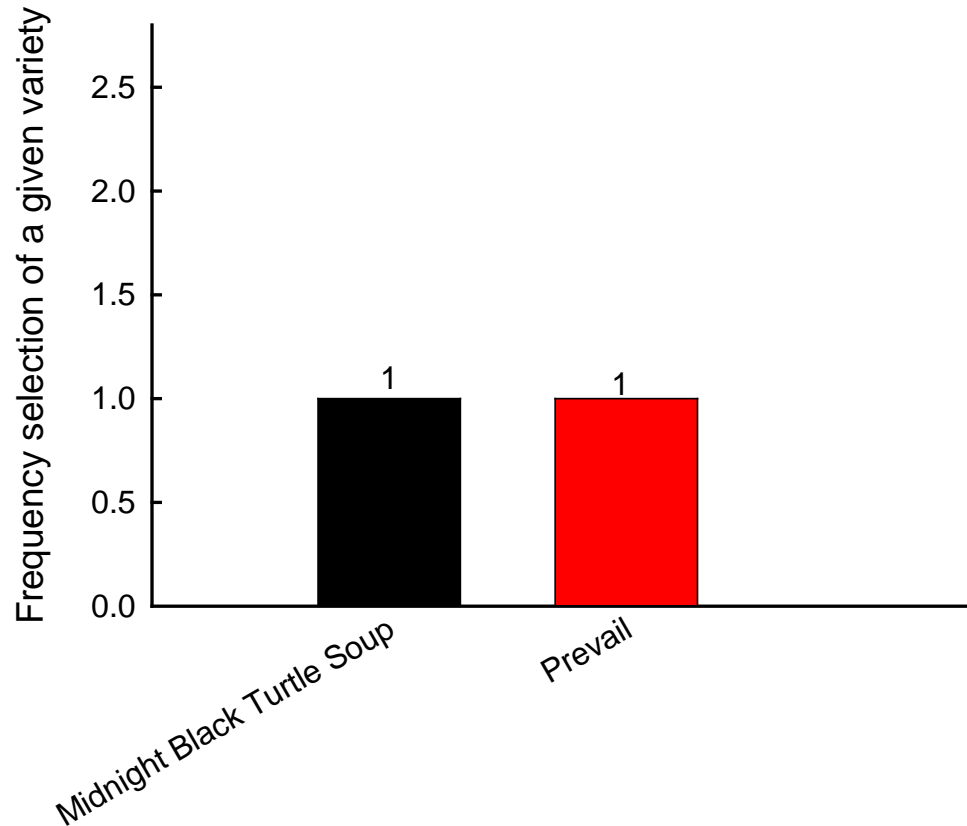
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Watermelon varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 10. Frequency of watermelon varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

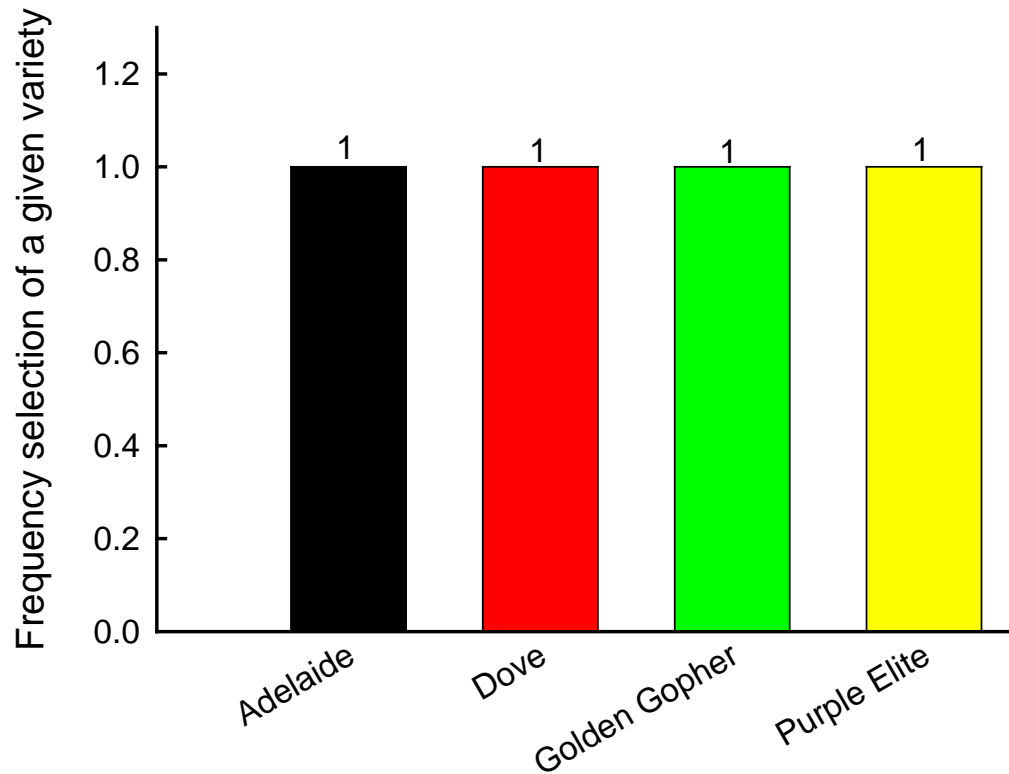
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Bean varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 11. Frequency of bean varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

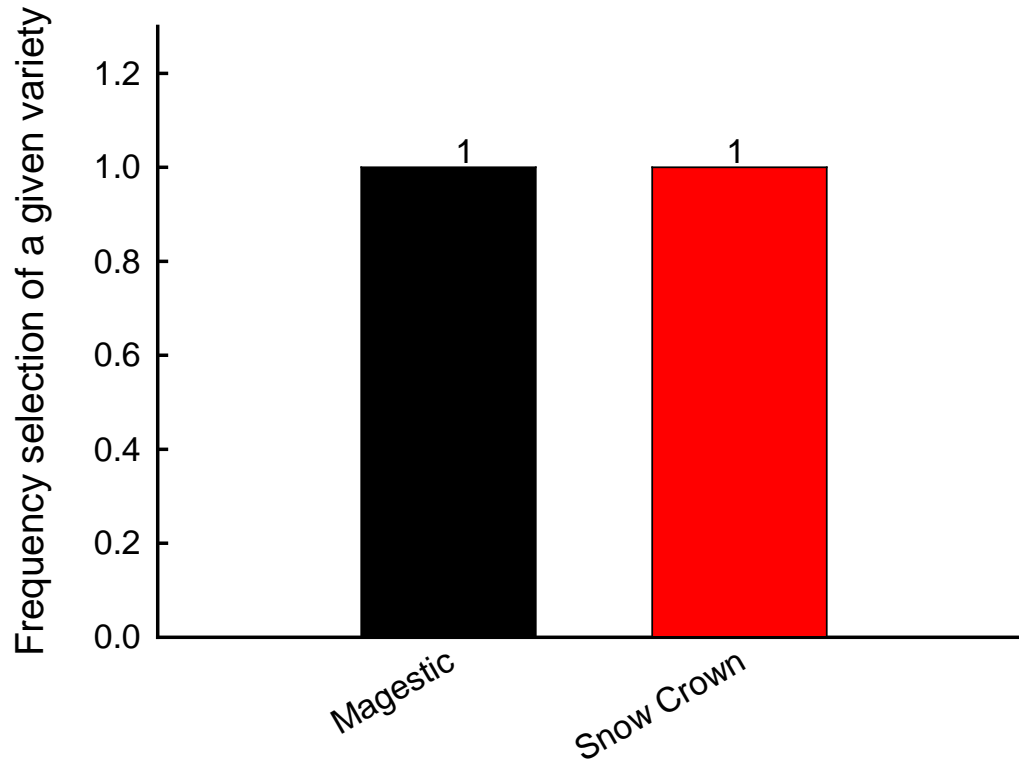
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Cantaloupe varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 12. Frequency of cantaloupe varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

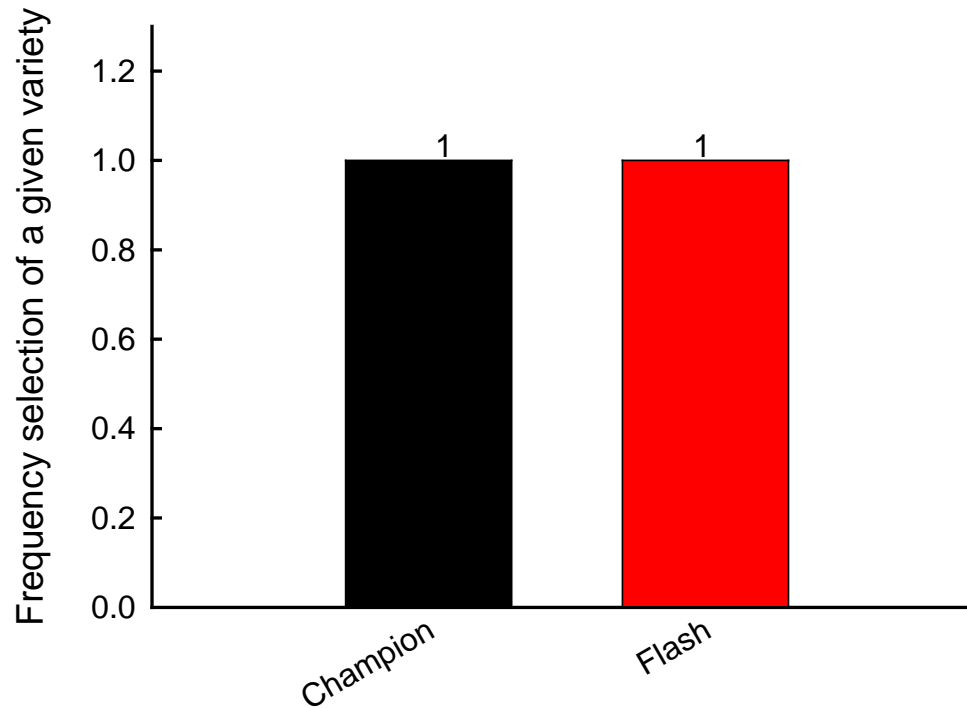
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Cauliflower varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 13. Frequency of cauliflower varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

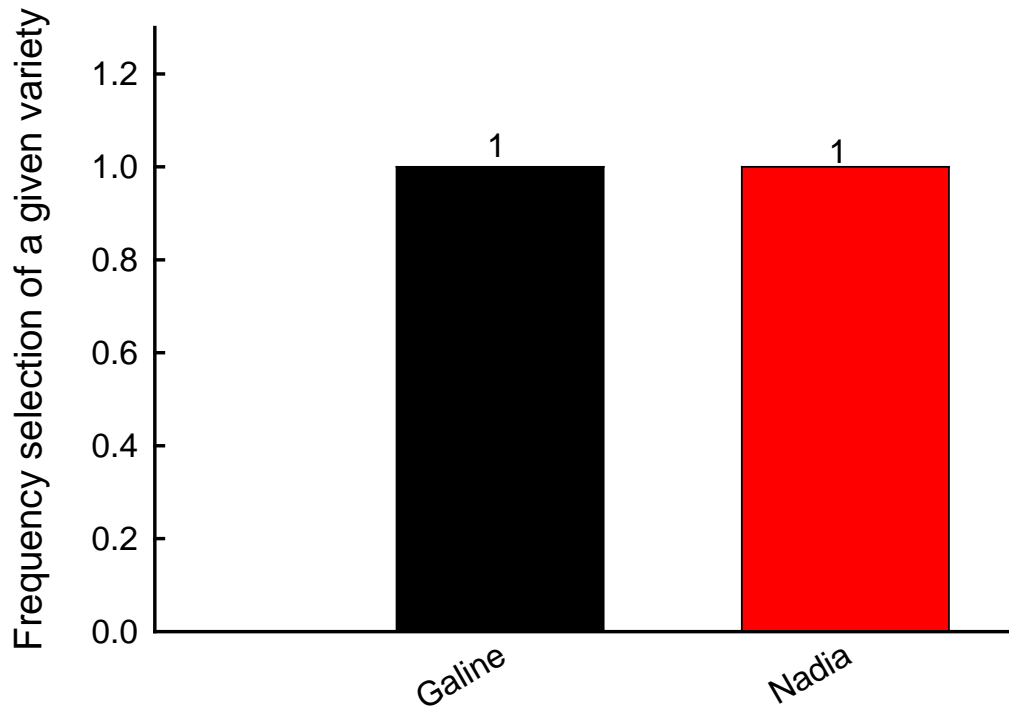
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Collard varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 14. Frequency of collard varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

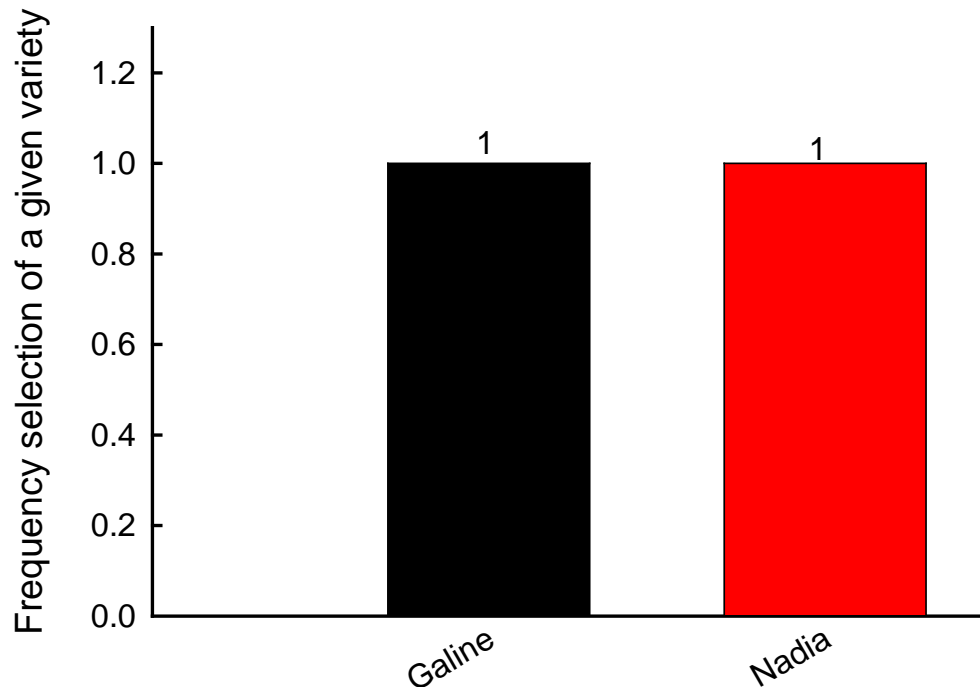
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Eggplant varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 15. Frequency of eggplant varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

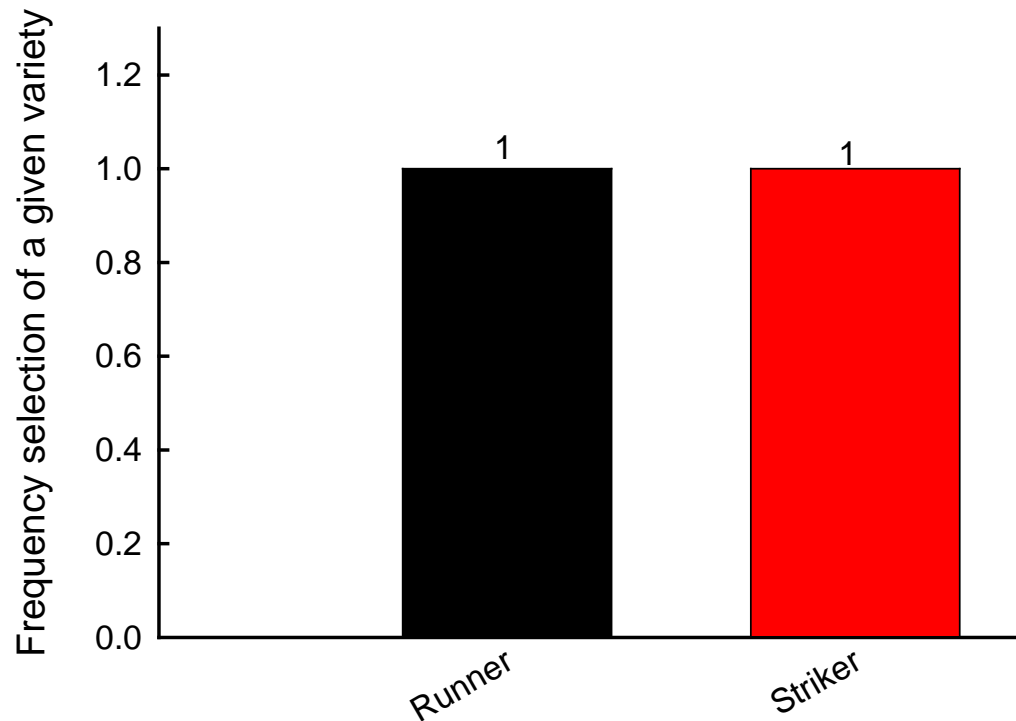
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Eggplant varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 15. Frequency of eggplant varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

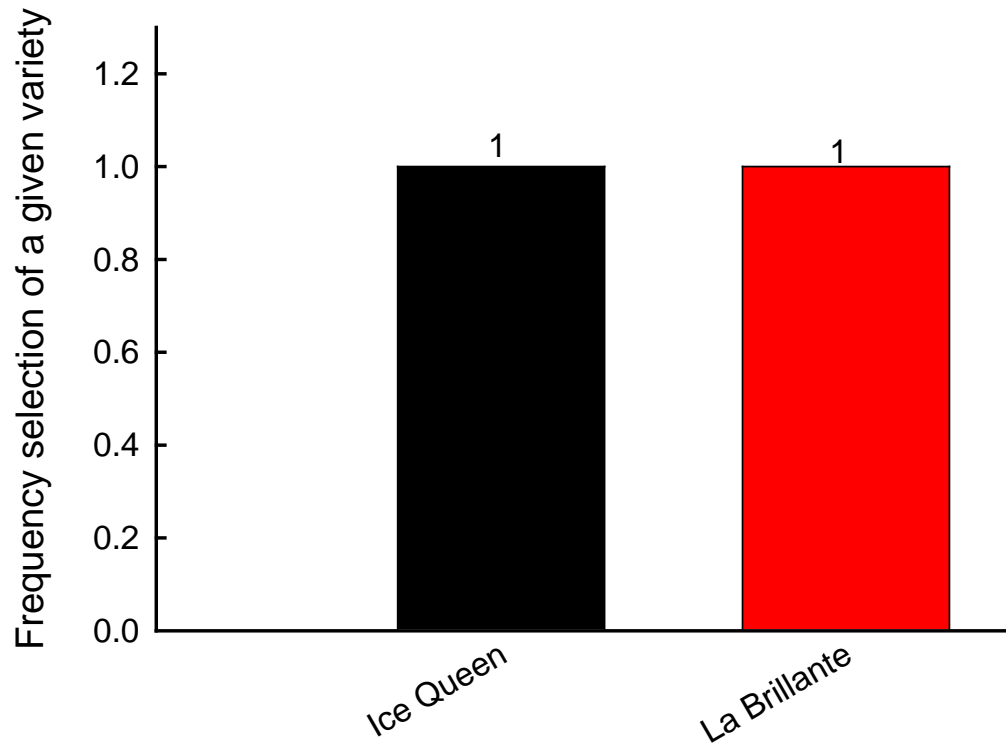
Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Leek varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 16. Frequency of leek varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)



Lettuce varieties grown in on-farm trials

Figure 17. Frequency of lettuce varieties grown in on-farm variety trials across the southeast in the 2018 growing season.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

- Objective 3. To develop a participatory extension and evaluation program to support organic food systems.
 - Under this objective, no major accomplishments to report: we lost the extension person we hired. However, some activities were undertaken to support all our growers: eight virtual meetings "lunchbox meetings" focusing on weather, cover cropping, pest and diseases, and harvesting: sweet potato, southern pea, tomato, and squash.

Accomplishments (Cont'd)

- Objective 4. To build a database for organic information for the benefits of organic growers in all regions of the nation.

- A page was developed on the eOrganic website for sharing information with growers:

<https://eorganic.info/southeast>

The page will be continuously updated to provide information to growers in the nation.