

## Hosta of the Year 2016: 'Curly Fries'



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Hosta are among the most popular of perennials for shady areas, with hundreds of varieties now readily available. Plants form a sturdy mound of foliage, topped with airy blooms. Each year the American Hosta Growers Association selects its Hosta of the Year to recognize hosta plants that are good garden plants in all regions of the country, are widely available, and retail for no more than \$15 in the year of selection. Since 1996 they have chosen great varieties that have exceptionally decorative foliage, showy or fragrant flowers, and perform well throughout USDA hardiness zones 3-9. Their choice for 2016 is 'Curly Fries'.

This small hosta was a seedling of 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake' selected by Bob Solberg of Green Hill Farm, and introduced in 2008. It forms a mounded clump perfect for tucking into small spots near the front of the border or growing in containers. It grows about 6 inches high, with a spread up to 16 inches across. The chartreuse color of the leaves in the spring changes to gold and then fades over the growing season to a creamy yellow. The best leaf color develops in plants grown with just morning sun. In too much sun the leaves fade to white by the end of the season.



'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake', the parent of 'Curly Fries'.



The narrow, strap-like leaves of 'Curly Fries' are fairly rigid with wavy edges.

— elongated and nearly strap-like — but with heavily rippled, wavy edges. The upper leaf surface is slightly shiny and petioles on mature plants have red specks. The leaves are only 1" wide, but with great substance, so the plants tend to be more durable than many small hostas.



The lavender flowers bloom in mid-summer.

In midsummer lavender blossoms are produced on red to purple scapes up to 2 feet tall, held well above the foliage.



'Curly Fries' forms a rounded clump with long leaves.

This cultivar is quite vigorous with a medium growth rate. The color contrasts well with blue varieties of hosta or other plants with purple foliage, while the strap-like leaves and arched mound shape offers interesting contrast in form and texture with other perennials.

– Susan Mahr, *University of Wisconsin - Madison*

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### **Additional Information:**

- American Hosta Society – aims to promote, encourage, and foster the development, improvement, and enjoyment of the genus *Hosta* with information for everyone from beginners to long-time hostaphiles. At [www.hosta.org/](http://www.hosta.org/)
- The Hosta Library – a reference library, with photos, discussion forums, and lots of links related to the genus at [www.hostalibrary.org/](http://www.hostalibrary.org/)
- The Hosta Network – offers 150 hosta varieties through Bishop's Farms, but also has links to numerous societies, books and more at [www.hosta.net/](http://www.hosta.net/)
- The Hosta Forum on Garden Web – offers an opportunity to connect with other hosta lovers. At [forums.gardenweb.com/forums/hosta/](http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/hosta/)
- Ten Top Hostas – by Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor, University of Vermont at [pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/tentop.html](http://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/tentop.html)