Species Variety Cultivar Hybrid

What is a species?

The species name is the basic unit of classification. It describes one kind of plant within the genus, and is almost always an adjective. By itself, the species name is meaningless. For example, Digitalis purpurea is the botanical name for foxglove, while Echinacea purpurea is the name for purple coneflower.

What is a variety?

A variety is a grouping within a species that occurs naturally. In other words, no human intervention is required for a variety to exist. In most cases, varieties will be true to type in that the seedlings will have the parent plants’ unique characteristics.

What is a cultivar?

A cultivar is a cultivated variety; the word is literally a portmanteau of cultivated and variety. This type of plant is cultivated by selecting a specimen that has a desirable characteristic. Just as varieties are a natural grouping within a species, cultivars are artificial and occur as a product of human intervention.

There are many different types of cultivars. A cultivar can consist of a hybrid, or it can simply be an unusual form of a species.

What is a hybrid?

A hybrid is a cross of two varieties. With a hybrid, you get characteristics from each parent plant. In most cases, the parent plants will belong to the same genus. Chili peppers can be hybridized by crossing two self-pollinating varieties after which the seeds are collected. Self-pollinating varieties are those where the farmer or gardener takes special measures to prevent out-crossing, also known as cross-breeding. A bag or a cage may be placed over the plant to prevent unwanted pollination.

A hybrid can occur in nature without human intervention or it can be man-made. If it is deliberately man-made, it is also a cultivar.

Sources:

Cultivar Vs. Variety Vs. Hybrid: Adapted from : Pepper Scale Showdown

<https://www.pepperscale.com/cultivar-vs-variety-vs-hybrid>

[Native Cultivars vs. Native Plants & Their Attractiveness to Pollinators](https://duckduckgo.com/l/?kh=-1&uddg=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecobeneficial.com%2F2014%2F04%2Fnative-cultivars-vs-native-plants%2F)

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