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### USDA/ NRCS

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June, 2004



## ICY BLUE GERMPLASM CANADA WILD RYE



*Released by*  
**Rose Lake Plant Materials  
Center**

*East Lansing, Michigan*

# ICY BLUE GERMPLASM CANADA WILDRYE

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD), and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announce the release of a tested ecotype of Canada Wildrye (*Elymus Canadensis* L.) for the Midwest and Great Lakes regions. This collection came from La Port County, Indiana

## Description

*Icy Blue* is a native perennial bunchgrass that grows to four feet tall with erect or arching culms and flat, wide pointed leaves that grow from the base of the stem to the spike.

As a cool season grass, rapid growth occurs early in the growing season, and slows during the mid-summer months. Active growth resumes in the fall and continues through first frost.

*Icy Blue* has a whitish, waxy bloom, giving it a distinctive “icy blue” color on the leaf surface and the stems. Auricles are claw-like and clasping, arising from a broad, yellowish, or light green collar. The thick and bristly spikelets can reach ten inches in length, and are often two or three to a node. Awns grow to two inches and are usually outwardly twisted.

## Environment Impact Assessment

*Icy Blue* Germplasm Canada wildrye is a selection of naturally occurring germplasm and has been unaltered. *Icy Blue* Germplasm was determined “OK to release” when evaluated for environment impact using the criteria adopted by the NRCS Plant Materials Program.

## Conservation Use

*Icy Blue* is intended for use in prairie restoration, erosion control, and wildlife habitat enhancement.

It is a fast germinating perennial bunchgrass that is well suited for stabilizing erodible soil or other disturbed areas. It is often an early successional component of prairie mixtures. This species will also provide forage for grazing and browsing wildlife, and the seeds will provide food for some songbirds.

## Adaptation

This species range is throughout the continental United States, except southeastern states. The anticipated areas of use are the Great Lakes and Midwest regions and are within the species range. Canada wildrye grows well on soils found on sandy shores and dunes, wooded areas, and other disturbed sites throughout much of North America.

## Availability

Breeder and foundation seeds will be maintained by the USDA-NRCS Rose Lake Plant Materials Center and will be made available in limited quantities beginning in 2005 to interested parties for increase purposes. For further information contact the Plant Materials Specialist or Plant Materials Center Manager.

