

New Tools from the Plant Materials Toolkit
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The Aberdeen PMC is cooperating with the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service to release a native flax and a bluebunch wheatgrass. These new releases will be a nice addition to the Plant Materials "toolkit" that you use to help solve resource problems.

In 1980, the Forest Service Shrub Sciences Laboratory in Provo, Utah and the Aberdeen PMC cooperatively released 'Appar' blue flax. It is recommended as a component of a seed mixture to provide diversity and beauty. Appar was originally identified as a native species to North America but was later determined to be an introduced species from Europe.

The PMC is assisting the Shrub Sciences Lab to compare Appar to one of the more promising native accessions collected near Maple Grove, Utah. The Maple Grove Selection produces 70 to 90 percent as much seed as Appar, an important consideration for seed growers. The PMC has established a seed increase field at the PMC and Certified seed will be available to commercial seed growers in early 2004.

'Goldar' was the first released cultivar of bluebunch wheatgrass. It was released by the Aberdeen PMC and the ARS Forage and Range Laboratory Logan, Utah in 1989. Goldar has been noted for rapid establishment, high forage production and the ability to survive in areas receiving at least 12 inches of annual precipitation. However, less than desirable seedling vigor has occasionally been noted. The PMC is assisting the Shrub Sciences Lab to increase seed of 'Anatone' bluebunch wheatgrass.

'Anatone' was selected from seed originating near Anatone, Washington. Its full range of adaptation is unknown at this time but it is expected to have rapid establishment, and to survive in areas receiving at least 10 inches of annual precipitation. The seed increase field that the PMC established last spring did exhibit excellent seedling vigor. Certified seed from the Anatone seed increase field at the PMC will also be available to commercial seed growers in early 2004.

These new plant materials products have been developed under the auspices of the Great Basin Native Plant Selection and Increase Project. This work is funded by the Bureau of Land Management Great Basin Restoration Initiative and the Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station with many other cooperating agencies including the Aberdeen PMC.

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