Management

Volunteer stands are improved by disking in March of subsequent years. Burning also apparently stimulates the seed and increases volunteer plants. Studies have shown that clipping the plant to 6 inches when it attains a height of 3 feet increases the density of the plant and increases seed production. The shorter height allows seed to be harvested by combine without a great amount of seed loss.

Availability

Chapingo germplasm (PI-422162), released in 1995, may be obtained by contacting the Brooksville Plant Materials Center.

For More Information

Brooksville Plant Materials Center
14119 Broad Street
Brooksville, Florida 34601
Phone: 352-796-9600
http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/flpmc/

or

Plant Materials Specialist for Florida
P.O. Box 141510
Gainesville, FL 32614
Phone: 352-338-9544

or

any USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office

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United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Chapingo

Mexican Teosinte

Zea mexicana

Brooksville Plant Materials Center, Florida

Description

Chapingo Mexican teosinte (*Zea mexicana*) was collected in Chapingo, Mexico. Teosinte is closely related to and resembles maize or Indian corn. The very firm seed of teosinte is produced in small pods, resembling ears of corn, growing in the uppermost leaf axils. Each "ear" contains 3 to 8 seed arranged in linear end to end manner.

A field of teosinte provides cover and a long term food supply for wildlife. Deer use the young growth for forage. Whether the plant is standing or lodged, birds will readily eat the seed from the pods after other food sources have been consumed. Teosinte also provides birds with a late season food supply because the seed is hard and remains on the ground.

Because this plant resembles corn, there is reason to believe the stalks can be harvested and used for silage. Teosinte will voluntarily reseed.

Planting Methods

For best results, plant on fertile soils ranging from somewhat poorly drained to well-drained. Plow and thoroughly disk area row plantings, which have given higher per acre seed production and more robust plants. Seed should be placed at a depth of 1-2 inches using 8-10 pounds per acre. Broadcast plantings at 10-12 pounds per acre are followed by shallow disking for seed coverage. Recommended spacing for the greatest amount of seed production is 24 square feet per plant; spacing of 12 square feet per plant produced less than half the amount of seed.

In Florida, approximately 112 growing days are necessary to permit tasseling and seed-set. Planting in April and May achieve this. Later planting dates produced smaller plants and less seed. For best growth, fertilizer should be applied at planting and supplemented periodically, according to soil set.