

Pilgrim Germplasm Velvet Panicum

Pilgrim Germplasm velvet panicum is a selected class release by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service East Texas Plant Materials Center.



Pilgrim Germplasm velvet panicum (*Dichanthelium scoparium*) is a native cool season perennial bunchgrass. This accession was collected in Camp County, Texas and assigned the accession number 9057334.

Conservation Use

This plant has potential for use in revegetation of critical areas and providing a source of food for songbirds, small mammals, and game birds. The basal rosette provides winter forage for wild turkey and white tailed deer.

Description

Pilgrim Germplasm velvet panicum produces a basal rosette during winter

with stems developing in the spring. It has erect, coarse stems up to 4.5' tall. The gray-green stems and leaves are covered with fine hairs. The leaves of Pilgrim germplasm velvet panicum vary in size from ½" to ¾" wide and 2" to 6" long.

Adaptation

Dichanthelium scoparium is adapted to coarse and medium textured soils with a pH of 4.5 to 7.5. Precipitation for this species ranges from 30 to 50 inches per year. This species is shade tolerant and found in woodlands and low moist ditches. Pilgrim Germplasm velvet panicum is potentially adapted for use in the southeastern United States.

Establishment

Fertilize planting area according to soil test for establishment. Maintain fertility levels at medium conditions and soil pH near 6.0. To reduce weed competition, do not over apply nitrogen.

Plant the seed at a rate of 3 pure live seed pounds per acre in the fall when the ground is moist. Drill or hand plant seeds at a depth of ½" or less. If broadcasting, use a cultipacker to increase seed to soil contact.

Seed Production and Management

Pilgrim Germplasm velvet panicum produces two seed crops per year: an open seed panicle in the summer (May to June) and a closed seed panicle in the fall. Summer seed harvest can be completed using a flail vac or combine.



Open panicle of Pilgrim Germplasm



Harvesting seed with a flail vac seed harvester.



Fall seed produced in the sheath.

The seeds produced in the fall are found in the spikelet sheath and can be harvested with a combine.

Seed Production

When managing for seed production, mow the old stems in the spring to clip off previous years growth. Be careful not to damage the rosettes.

At the East Texas Plant Materials Center, seed production studies indicate open panicle production averages about 60 pounds of bulk seed per acre.

Dry the harvested seed before cleaning and storage. Seed is cleaned with a two screen air seed cleaner with a 6/64 top screen and a 1/23 bottom screen with very little air flow.

Availability

Commercial seed growers interested in producing Pilgrim Germplasm velvet panicum should contact the Texas Foundation Seed Service to obtain seed.

For More Information:

Visit our Plant Materials internet site at <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> to find more information on solving conservation problems using plants.

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