Cooperative Releases

The Elsberry PMC has released a total of 85 plants and of this total 77 are still being used in the commercial market. Seventy-one of these releases are native plants. The following is a partial listing of Elsberry's releases:

Cultivars: 'Cave-In-Rock' switchgrass, 'Rountree' big bluestem, 'Rumsey' indiangrass, 'Verl' eastern gamagrass, 'Bobwhite' soybean, 'Flame' Amur maple, 'Elsmo' lace-bark elm, 'Union' tulip poplar, 'Redstone' cornelian dogwood.

Selections: OH-370 big bluestem, OZ-70 big bluestem, Alexander showy tick trefoil, Cuivre River Virginia wildrye, Refuge big bluestem, Midwest Premium American plum.

Source Identified Germplasm: horsemint, gray-head coneflower, pale purple coneflower, purple prairie clover, tall dropseed, big bluestem, switchgrass, Junegrass, sideoats grama, rough and prairie blazing star.

The Elsberry Plant Materials Center leads the nation in the number of PMC releases.

The Key to Success is Cooperation

The success of the Plant Materials Program is achieved daily through cooperation at all levels. The following is a partial list of cooperators who are participating in plant materials studies:

University of Missouri at Columbia
Agriculture Research Service, USDA
Missouri Department of Conservation
University of Northern Iowa
Missouri Crop Improvement Association
Iowa Crop Improvement Association
State Fair Community College
Northwest Missouri State
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Dept. of Interior
Chariton Valley RC&D

Tours are Available

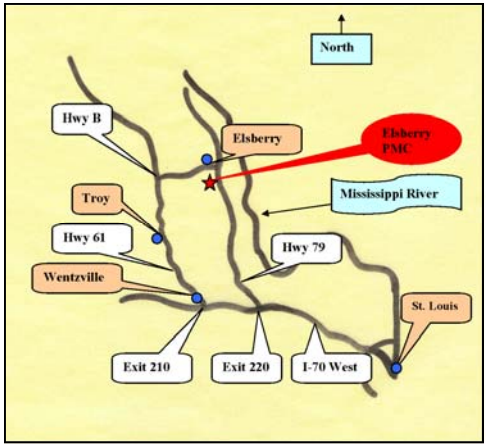
Visitors are always welcome at the Elsberry Plant Materials Center. The staff is eager to share its enthusiasm for plant and conservation needs. The public's awareness and support are important to the continued success of the program.

Tours are available Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
2803 North Highway 79
Elsberry, Missouri 63343

Please call before visiting the Plant Materials Center to ensure that someone will be available for a tour and to answer any questions.

Phone: 573-898-2012
Fax: 573-898-5298

September 2006



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USDA NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service

ELSBERRY
PLANT MATERIALS CENTER

TEL: 573-898-2012
FAX: 573-898-5019
Website: http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/mopmc

OLDEST IN THE NATION
SERVING
ILLINOIS, IOWA, AND MISSOURI

The Elsberry Plant Materials Center (PMC) is one of a national network of plant centers dedicated to providing vegetative solutions to conservation problems. The center is owned and operated by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The Elsberry PMC was established in June 1934 making it the oldest Center in the nation.

Service Area

The PMC serves a diverse region of the Midwest; specifically Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri. Significant contributions, however, are made affecting all Midwestern states. This area of the country was originally native grasslands, savannahs, and mixed hardwood forests. Annual amounts of precipitation in this region can vary greatly. Temperatures fluctuate widely and are often accompanied by high winds. Soil types also vary widely. The extremes of climate and soil offer a challenging and varied environment in which conservation plants must survive and flourish to be effective.

Today this region's land use is largely devoted to agriculture.

The production of food and fiber is the leading industry in the Midwest. Additional land users enjoy many activities that involve the natural resources of the area, i.e. fishing, hunting, and boating. When natural resources are used in a responsible manner, the risk of damage and overuse is reduced and the resource is conserved for the future. However, some activities can be detrimental to resources and can create erosion or other environmental disturbances. When this occurs, plants can often be used to restore and protect the environment. **The primary focus of the Plant Materials Program is to develop hardy, desirable plants that have the ability to survive and prosper under adverse conditions.**

Released plant materials are being used to address the following situations:

- Conservation of highly erosive soils
- Range and pasture improvement
- Field, farmstead buffers and filter strips.
- Wildlife and wetland habitat improvement
- Water and air quality improvement
- Biodiversity improvement
- Invasive species reduction
- Roadside beautification
- Biomass energy use

Program Objectives

The purpose of the Plant Materials Program is to:

1. Assemble, select, improve, test, and release plant varieties or germplasm for conservation uses, and to promote the use of improved plant materials to meet the priorities and objectives of the NRCS Conservation Strategic Plan.

2. Encourage commercial production.

3. Develop management and cultural techniques necessary for establishment and acceptance of promising plant materials.

4. Produce limited quantities of foundation quality seed or seedlings to stimulate commercial production.

Program Products

The PMC and Plant Materials Specialist (PMS) cooperate with a variety of public and private conservation partners to select and produce improved plants for conservation. The program also develops state-of-the-art technology necessary for successful conservation plantings that help reduce soil erosion and improve water and air quality. The reward for the producer is improved crop production, lower input costs, and positive environmental impacts to natural resources.

The PMC and PMS also coordinate field activities that provide answers for USDA Service Center staffs on questions such as invasive species control, techniques for establishing native legumes and forbs, and plant and seed identification. Questions posed by field offices are often insightful, since their customers are the producers that face conservation challenges on a daily basis.

The Plant Materials Program has made a significant contribution to the conservation of natural resources in the United States. The program has and is providing land-based solutions to erosion problems that have plagued this country since the invention of the moldboard plow. Using common sense and applied research, the PM program staff has developed and distributed plants that provide solutions to conservation problems.