

Plant Materials Center

July 2004

Elsberry, Missouri Plant Materials Center

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Issues/Activities



Who We Are

The Elsberry Plant Materials Center (PMC) is a branch of the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). It is one of 26 plant materials centers located throughout the United States. Areas served include Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois. The Center is located approximately 60 miles north and west of St. Louis, Missouri.

What We Do

It is our mission to develop and transfer effective state-of-the-art plant sciences technology to meet customer and resource needs. NRCS Plant Materials activities are consistent with the objectives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and NRCS Strategic Plans, namely to provide timely and effective vegetative solutions for resource needs. Emphasis is on using native plants. Superior adapted plants are developed, tested and released to commercial growers along with production and management technology.

Four major objectives are addressed:

1. Biodiversity of plant species for Wildlife, Wetlands and Restoration
2. Increase Forage Quality and Quantity
3. Improve Water Quality by Filtering and Sediment Control, Utilizing Nutrients, and Stabilizing Shorelines
4. Additional Conservation Needs of Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois

Major Objective #1: Increase Biodiversity of Plants. Developing Native Plants to Address Resource needs

Native species are needed for prairie and roadside plantings, prairie landscaping, plantings for wildlife food and habitat (WHIP), critical area cover and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

The Elsberry PMC in cooperation with the University of Northern Iowa, Native Roadside Vegetation Center, Iowa Department of Transportation and the Iowa Crop Improvement Association has released 58 source identified native ecotypes to commercial seed growers. Iowa 2003 commercial value of this ecotype seed was \$1,000,000.00 produced by seed growers for the private market.



Iowa Ecotype *Liatris aspera*,
Rough Blazing Star
Released in 2003

Major Objective #2: Increase Forage Quality and Quantity.

OZ-70 Germplasm Big Bluestem was released in 2003 for pasture and hay production. The PMC has released three cultivars of warm season grass that are also in commercial production.



OZ-70 Big Bluestem on July 9, 2003
Elsberry PMC

Major Objective #3: Improve Water Quality by Filtering and Sediment Control.

A conservation need is being addressed for the use of native wetland species of cool season grasses and sedges to determine their performance for conservation practices such as filter strips and buffers.

In 2002 and 2003 The Elsberry PMC and field offices in Missouri, Iowa and Illinois made 52 collections of 23 different species of native cool season grasses and sedges.

Major objective # 4: New Conservation Needs.

The PMC is testing the tolerance of selected woody species to the herbicide Outrider (Sulosulfuron). The need is the establishment of woody species in wetland areas that have severe competition from grasses after planting, such as Johnsongrass.

2003 Performance Goals based on National and Program Objectives:

Performance Goals Based On National And Program Objectives – Plant Materials Program Projections – Elsberry Missouri Plant Materials Center			
	Description of Performance Measure/Products	Goaled Amount Missouri PMC	Accomplished FY 03
1	New plant releases	8	8
2	Provide oral plant technology transfer	12	16
3	Produce new written plant technology transfer	15	22
4	Plant Materials studies evaluated	25	25
5	Number of individual cooperators (government, universities, etc.) assisted	14	19
6	Total number of contacts with cooperators	60	65
7	Number of individual field offices assisted	90	83
8	Total number of contacts with field offices	130	147
9	Contacts: Individuals/farms and ranches assisted	90	183

Concerns: Adequate Funding for Staffing to carry out program needs.
Adequate funding for short and long term equipment needs.

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