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# Plants for Conservation

Volume 4 No. 1 Elsberry Plant Materials Center for Programs in Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa

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## Elsberry PMC Hosts Spring Tour

By Jimmy Henry, PMC Manager

The Elsberry Plant Materials Center (PMC) is planning to host the annual PMC tour which is intended to give NRCS, SWCD, MDC and DNR personnel an opportunity to visit the center. This tour is open to personnel in the 3-states being served by the PMC (IA, IL, & MO). The scheduled date is June 13, 2001, starting at 10:00 AM and ending around 3:00 PM.



## 2001 Featured Plant American Plum

*Prunus americana*

By Jerry Kaiser  
Plant Materials Specialist

Wild plum or American Plum *Prunus americana* is one of the first shrubs to bloom in woodlands. Its showy white flowers appear before the leaves have unfolded and while woods are mostly bare of foliage. Wild Plum is a shrub or small tree 1-8 m (3-24 ft) tall, and usually form thickets.

Flowers are white, are arranged in three to five inch clusters, and appear March through May. Fruits are red and yellow, usually 7/8 to 1 1/4 inches, seeds are somewhat flattened and ripen June through October.

Wild plum is an excellent species for wildlife food and habitat. It is effective in erosion control because its roots hold the soil. It is also used for windbreak plantings, landscape and beautification. Plum thickets often furnish valuable protective shelter for wildlife. The fruit is eaten by many species of birds, including bobwhite

quail. White-tailed deer, raccoons and squirrels also eat the fruit. The fruit makes excellent jellies and preserves, or may be eaten raw or cooked.

Wild Plum Seedlings are available from the PMC for field plantings for the following MLRA and Suitability Groups.

Sites still needed in ILLINOIS:  
MLRA-108 A&B  
Suitability Groups 1&5  
MLRA-134- Group 7

Sites still needed in IOWA:  
MLRA-103 and 109 for Suitability Groups 1,3 &5

Contact the PMC for additional Information.



## PMC PLANT RELEASES IN 2000

The Plant Materials Center released four new Iowa ecotypes in 2000. They are Northern Iowa Germplasm tall dropseed, roundhead lespedeza, and big bluestem, and Southern Iowa Germplasm prairie blazing star. These can be used for roadside plantings, prairie establishment, wildlife plantings and CRP.



## Elsberry PMC Received Premier Seed Grower Award

Jimmy Henry, Manager of the Elsberry PMC received a Special Premier Seed Award for the PMC from the Missouri Seed Improvement Association (MSIA) Annual Meeting. This meeting took place on February 8, 2001. The association presents the award to a member who has shown a commitment to producing high quality certified seed throughout the years, for continued service to the MSIA, and for the Center's outstanding reputation for marketing superior agricultural products.



## Status of the Bur Oak & False Indigo Bush Collections

By Jimmy Henry

A total of 24 collections of bur oak were made from the PMC service area (Iowa, Illinois & Missouri): seven from Iowa, two from Illinois and 15 from Missouri. These collections are presently germinating in the greenhouse. Germination appears to be good.

A total of 32 collections of false indigo bush were made from the PMC service area: 19 from Iowa, four from Illinois, eight from Missouri and one from North Dakota. These collections have been assigned accession numbers and placed in the greenhouse for germination. Again, germination seems to be good.

The PMC wishes to thank everyone who participated in these collections and encourages anyone to call the Center if questions arise concerning your collection.



## Update of Little Bluestem Assembly

By Steven Bruckerhoff,  
Conservation Agronomist

Selections have been made and the second round of evaluations will start this year. Thanks again to everyone involved in the collections made in the fall of 1996. There were 131 collections from the three-state service area.

The replicated study was planted in 1997, phenological and production data was taken in 1998 and 1999, and production, regrowth, and forage quality data was taken in 2000. Ten collections were selected from the northern region that includes Iowa, Northern Illinois and Northern Missouri. Fourteen collections were selected from the southern region that includes Southern Missouri and Central and Southern Illinois.

The selections will be increased in the greenhouse from clonal material and planted in isolated blocks. These blocks will undergo another round of evaluations to eliminate unwanted plants and then become the breeders' blocks for selected releases. These selections could become available by 2005.



## Plant Materials on the Web

By Jerry Kaiser

Check-out these websites

<http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>  
click on *Plant Information*, go to *Plant Materials Publications*, Look for *Publications by PMC*, Highlight *Elsberry* or one of the 26 Centers, and you will find current information on planting guides, releases, brochures, fact sheets, etc. on native forbs, legumes, and grasses.

What's New for [www.plants.usda.gov](http://www.plants.usda.gov)

- 1) A new Crop Nutrient Tool- it projects nutrient removal.
- 2) Alternative Crops Module.
- 3) Plant guides and fact sheets are combined.

Each state's homepage (Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri) have Plant Materials Information.

For Iowa [www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov), Click on *Natural Resources Product*, Click on the by year *View the Elsberry Plant Materials Technical Report*.

For Illinois [www.il.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.il.nrcs.usda.gov) Click on "*Information on*", Click on *Plant Materials*. Click on by year *Technical Report Elsberry Plant Materials Center*

For Missouri [www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov) Click on *Services*, then *Program Assistance*, click on Icon for *PM Program*. Also under *Technical Support*, click on for the new *Plant Materials Manual*. Also under *Reports and Maps*, click on Icons by year of the *Technical Report Elsberry Plant Materials Center*.



## Release of Virginia Wildrye

By Steven Bruckerhoff

Virginia wildrye is a cool season native species that is typically found in shady areas. Native stands are usually thin and not competitive.

Release documentation will soon be complete for a Lincoln County, Missouri Selection of Virginia Wildrye. This selection was collected by Missouri Department of Conservation employees from flood prone areas in eastern Lincoln County. This species is shade tolerant and can be used as a cover crop for tree plantings and also for low-lying wet areas.

This selection is a good seed producer and is commercially available. It has the accession number 9083169. For more information call the Plant Materials Center.



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