



## Elsberry PMC Hosts Summer Tours

By Jimmy Henry, PMC Manager

The Elsberry Plant Materials Center (PMC) is planning to host two summer tours; the annual PMC tour which is intended to give NRCS, SWCD, MDC and DNR personnel who have never visited the Center, or not in recent years, an opportunity. This tour is open to personnel in the 3-states being served by the PMC (IA, IL, & MO). The scheduled date June 14, 2000, starting at 10:00 AM and ending around 3:00 PM.

The PMC will also be a host for members of the National Soil & Water Conservation Society of America. The PMC staff will conduct the tour on July 11 starting at 9:30 AM and ending at 2:30 PM. The intent of this tour will be to share and discuss the different studies presently being carried on at the Center.



## Eastern Gamagrass Study Starting Advanced Evaluation at the PMC

By Steve Bruckerhoff, Conservation Agronomist

The Elsberry PMC is working together with USDA-ARS Experiment Station located in Woodward, Oklahoma to compare experimental accessions of eastern gamagrass to 'Pete' eastern gamagrass. Woodward has four accessions and Elsberry has five accessions to be evaluated. These accessions were selected from the nine state assembly collected by field offices in 1989. The original assembly was lost in the flood of 1993 and was a major setback. Selected accessions came from Missouri and Illinois.

Small increase plots will be established at the PMC and hopefully some seed will be available for field plantings by 2002 or 2003. Data will be collected for three years after the establishment year on the replicated study. A release of an improved eastern gamagrass is expected in 2004.



## Plant Needs Shared by Field Office Questionnaires

By Jerry Kaiser, Plant Materials Specialist

I would like to thank the field offices that completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire is based on ranking the highest priority conservation practices that the Elsberry Plant Materials Program can address. Your additional input provided direction for the Five-Year Business Plan. Please review the top priorities by each state.

### *Illinois' Top Priorities by Practice*

1. Filter Strips
2. Riparian forest buffers
3. Conservation cover
4. Wetland restoration and wildlife habitat
5. Streambank/shoreline and nutrient management

### *Iowa's Top Priorities by Practice*

1. Filter strips
2. Streambank/shoreline protection
3. Grassed waterways, residue management and pasture and hayland plantings

### *Missouri's Top Priorities by Practice*

1. Critical area plantings

2. Conservation cover, prescribed grazing and nutrient management
3. Filter strips, pasture/hayland plantings and residue management



## New Studies for Elsberry Plant Materials Program

By Jerry Kaiser, Plant Materials Specialist

The Three-State Technical Committee conducted its three year review of the Elsberry Plant Materials Program. Technical specialists from Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri developed recommendations for new studies for the Five-Year Business Plan.

The Committee utilized information gathered from the field office questionnaires and from the areas' and states' plant materials committees to determine recommendations for additional needs.

Following this meeting a tele-conference was conducted with the three state conservationists for their approval of the update to the Five-Year Business Plan.

The following studies will be conducted in the next five years.

### *Five high priority new studies:*

1. Collect and evaluate native cool season grasses such as Virginia wildrye, Canada wildrye, sweetgrass, etc. for filter strips.
2. Compatibility study using warm season and cool season natives with native legumes/forbs and introduced legumes.

3. Collect false indigo bush, *Amorpha fruticosa*, seed from all three states for streambanks and wetland restoration. Investigate low growing shrubs for stream-bank stabilization, such as sandbar willow.
4. Collect flood tolerant bur oak seed from all three states along river systems that survived 1993 and 1995 flood events.
5. Develop digital ID Guide of native forbs at various stages of growth to put on the web for viewing by field offices.

*Five medium priorities for new studies:*

1. Collect American senna, *Cassia marilandica*, for a seed source to be used for wildlife and wetland habitat.
2. Agroforestry: select and plant at PMC six-eight pine species for pine straw potential.
3. Testing of native grasses, legumes and forbs for forage quality.
4. Collect *paspalum*, a warm season native grass, for Missouri and southern Illinois for a late summer forage species.
5. Develop a technical note for maintaining forbs in warm season grass cover.

*Seven current studies to be discontinued:*

The assembly and evaluation of blackhaw, nannyberry, downy serviceberry, and gray dogwood were placed on hold until a review is conducted on the need for these species. These are available on the commercial market. The recommendation from the Three-State Technical Committee was that no collections are needed for these species.

The woody columnar collection, conifers for windbreak plantings, and

eastern cottonwood studies will be discontinued.



## Collections Wanted in 2000!!!!

By Jerry Kaiser, Plant Materials Specialist

### 1) SEED OF BUR OAK (Quercus macrocarpa)....

The need is for seed from bur oaks that survived 1993 and 1995 flooding along major river systems (Mississippi, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, and Des Moines rivers). The ability of bur oak to survive those events will be an important source for riparian forest buffers.

### 2) SEED OF FALSE INDIGO OR INDIGO BUSH, (Amorpha fruticosa)...

False indigo bush can be a potential species for streambank stabilization and wetland restoration.

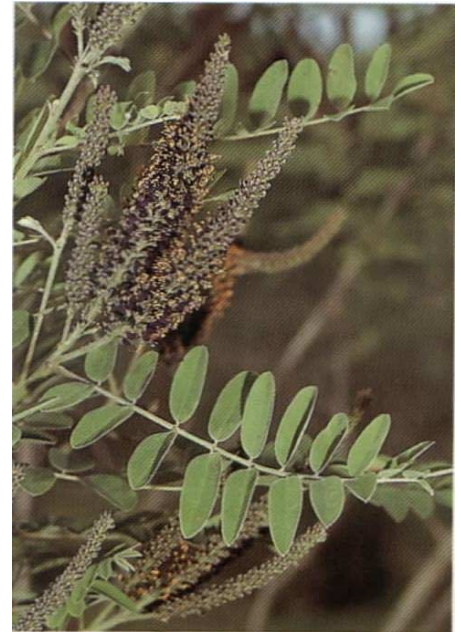
The following is information pertaining to this species.

Member of the bean family (Fabaceae)

**DESCRIPTION:** Large, bushy shrubs sometimes more than 10' tall, but often 5-6', with alternate, compound leaves. The oval leaflets are paired along a central axis, with an additional leaflet at the tip, so there are always an odd number of leaflets, ranging from 11-31. Each leaflet is up to 2" long and just over 1" wide, with a small, bristlelike point at the rounded tip. The flowers are in dense spikes on the upper part of the plant, often with several spikes clustered together. Each flower has a single, 1/4" long, dark indigo-purple petal wrapped around 10 protruding, yellow-tipped stamens. The flowering time is late spring-midsummer.

**HABITAT/RANGE:** Common in moist prairie thickets and along streams and rivers in prairies throughout the tallgrass region, but sporadically distributed east of Illinois.

Also occurs on rocky banks, borders of ponds, and low open wet woods.



False Indigo Bush  
("Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers")  
By Ladd and Oberle

So, please keep an eye out for the bur oak and false indigo bush. More information will follow on a bulletin or letter from your state conservationist on the collection process for each state.



The Elsberry Plant Materials Center would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who collect plant materials for these studies. The people in the field make a tremendous contribution toward the development of plant materials for conservation needs.

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