



This semi-annual newsletter is published by the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Center, 14119 Broad Street, Brooksville, FL 34601-4525, Tel: 352-796-9600, FAX: 352-799-7305. E-mail: clarence.maura@fl.usda.gov

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Well, this fits its name—very attractive in color. The butterflies and bees love it, and also the deer. Floral passion is a hardy perennial herb and has one to several long upright spikes 3 feet tall or taller, arising from a tuber (woody corm). Stems that have been damaged or grazed may produce multiple spikes. Leaves are alternate, gradually decreasing in length from the base of the stem upward. Many lavender or purple colored flowers are produced on the spikes in the fall. It is adapted to extremely coarse droughty soils similar to long leaf pine or turkey oak sandhills.

There are approximately 5 grams of seed available to nursery growers upon request. Contact Sam Sanders, Plant Materials Specialist, for additional information by telephone at (352) 338-9547 or by e-mail at sam.sanders@fl.usda.gov.

Floral Passion



She's Back and Doing It Again

Courtney Rumala, now a 10th grade student at Hernando Christian Academy, is back again working on another science project, "The Effect of Nitrogen on the Protein Synthesis of *Bacillus thuringiensis* in *Zea mays* L." The objective of her project is to find if nitrogen levels affect the toxin

The plants are growing and so are the armyworm larvae. The cuttings are fed to the larvae at Courtney's home where she studies them. Only time will tell.



Courtney Rumala

New Earth Team Volunteer—From Submarines to Plants

We have a new volunteer —Willard "Flash" Gordon, originally from Maryland, is retired from the U.S. Department of the Navy, David Taylor Naval Surface Warfare Center, where he worked as a sheet metal model submarine maker. He does a variety of jobs for us—from assembling manuals to working in the greenhouse and in the fields. He is a great asset to the PMC and his volunteer services are greatly appreciated.



FNATS Conference



Earth Team Volunteer

Florida Nursery and Allied Trade Show (FNATS) Conference

Clarence Maura (Plant Materials Manager), Sam Sanders (Plant Materials Specialist), and Mary Anne Gonter (Biological Science Technician, Plants) attended the FNATS conference in Orlando, FL, September 25 – 27, 2003. The National Plant Materials information booth was set up and manned. The booth provides public insight of functions of the Plant Materials Program. More than 10,600 people attended the Conference. Pauline Deavers, another Brooksville PMC volunteer, assisted in manning the booth.

2004 Plant Materials Available

Seed and/or plants of the following species are available to commercial growers:

- ◆ ‘Floral Passion’ (*Liatris elegans*, blazing star)
- ◆ ‘Miami’, ‘Stewart’, and ‘Wabasso’ switchgrass
- ◆ ‘Flora Sun’ beach sunflower
- ◆ ‘Northpa’ and ‘Southpa’ bitter panicum
- ◆ ‘Sharp’ and ‘Flageo’ marshhay cordgrass
- ◆ ‘Citrus’ maidencane
- ◆ ‘Floragraze’ and ‘Arbrook’ perennial peanut
- ◆ ‘Chapingo’ Mexican teosinte (seed)
- ◆ ‘Martin’ and ‘St. Lucie’ eastern gamagrass

These plants were selected to meet conservation needs and are recommended by USDA for planting throughout the Florida PMC service area. Growers should contact Plant Materials Specialist, Samuel Sanders, for additional information. Sam can be contacted by telephone at (352) 338-9547 or by e-mail at sam.sanders@fl.usda.gov.

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