

# Manhattan Plant Materials Center



A newsletter in support of the Plant Materials Program for Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma

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## Plants and Pollution

Plants have long served mankind as food, forage, medicine, and shelter. They provide needed habitat for wildlife species and produce the oxygen necessary for virtually all life on this planet. Plants also contribute to the job of reducing pollution on Earth. This is a huge task that has been made even harder by the wholesale destruction of forests, wetlands and prairies during the last 100 years. Couple this destruction with the current huge increase in the use of fossil fuels that release carbon dioxide into the Earth's atmosphere and you have a monumental pollution problem.

The world consumption of oil is estimated at 80 million barrels a day. This number is projected to grow by approximately 50 percent by the year 2025 to 120 million barrels a day. This huge amount of energy consumption will increase the carbon level in the atmosphere even higher than its present level. The use of plants to sequester carbon is perhaps one of the newer methods that plants can be called upon to mitigate the atmospheric carbon levels on Earth. Now that global warming has become more widely accepted internationally, there is a certain amount of economic interest in sequestering carbon. Large polluters are willing to pay others to plant and maintain trees to offset their carbon emission levels. This trend should increase the planting and maintenance of natural areas to directly mitigate environmental problems. Vegetation has long served mankind to help balance the environment and protect the

fragile ecosystem that life on this planet depends upon. The future should provide more economic and environmental benefits to maintain our vegetative heritage.



Neosho County Wetland Restoration

## Kansas Plant Materials Committee

The Kansas Plant Materials Committee met on January 11, 2005, to review the Plant Materials Program and the Kansas Long-Range Plan (LRP). Discussions covering the National Plant Materials Strategic Plan, plant materials survey and the Kansas Plant Materials LRP were covered.

The goal of the meeting was to discuss and update the Kansas LRP that was prepared in 1995. The committee identified seven (7) objectives to be included in the 2005 Kansas Plant Materials LRP.

Objectives include:

1. Evaluate plant materials for improving waterquality and quantity.

2. Evaluate plant materials for wetland restorations and enhancement.
3. Evaluate plant materials for riparian revegetation.
4. Evaluate plant materials for nutrient and pest management.
5. Evaluate plant materials for windbreak development, restoration and enhancement.
6. Evaluate plant materials that could serve as an alternative to Eastern redcedar in windbreak plantings.
7. A diverse and well-served customer base.

The Kansas LRP is intended to be used as a guide for directing plant materials activities within the state. Emphasis is placed on the high priority conservation needs in Kansas. It also recognizes the need to expand the use of proven materials, to broad uses for rapidly expanding resource conservation use.

This plan will be used along with the respective plans of the other states within the service area to develop the Manhattan, Plant Materials Center LRP.

### Working Trees for Water Quality



A new release from the USDA National Agroforestry Center (NAC) in 2004 was the 'Working Trees for Water Quality' brochure. The brochure explains the importance of water quality to all the

"neighbors" in a watershed and the consequences to the watershed of not

embracing water quality standards. The displacement of permanent vegetation by development or permanent annual crop production can create an increased threat of runoff into nearby streams, rivers, and lakes. Rapidly moving water creates flooding and facilitates the transport of sediment, pollutants, and dissolved contaminants into surface water supplies. The brochure takes an integrated look at vegetation placement and uses in the entire landscape of the watershed and how the use and placement of trees can be a big factor in improving overall water quality. The brochure explains how trees can be utilized to reduce flooding and flood damage, improve aquatic habitat and help filter contaminants before they enter surface water systems. The working trees series of brochures can be obtained by writing to the National Agroforestry Center, East Campus-UNL, Lincoln, NE 68583 or by contacting NAC on the web at [www.unl.edu/nac](http://www.unl.edu/nac).

### Native Grass Seed Workshop

Mid-West Seed Services Inc. of Brookings, South Dakota (<http://www.mwseed.com>) announced that it will be sponsoring the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Native Grass Seed Workshop in Omaha, Nebraska. The workshop is set to begin at 8:00 AM on Wednesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at The Crowne Plaza Hotel. The day and a half workshop will feature discussions on topics as varied as: native legume cultivar development, switchgrass seed dormancy, Maximilian sunflower production and germination studies on native coreopsis species. For a more complete agenda, go to the above listed website for Mid-West Seed Services. A registration form can be downloaded from the web site, too. Registration for the workshop by February 1st will result in a reduced registration fee. See you in lovely Omaha in February!

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