

Introduction

The original collection material of Northpa and Southpa bitter panicum (*Panicum amarum*) was vegetative. The origin of Northpa (PI-421957) was Dare County, NC; Southpa (PI-561721) was Palm Beach County, FL. It was released by the Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service) in 1992.

Description

Northpa and Southpa bitter panicum (*Panicum amarum*) are native warm season coarse perennial grasses, with hairless glaucous culms, in clumps or solitary from stout, creeping rhizomes. Erect culms are 0.3 to 2 meters or more tall. Northpa has a sub-erect to slightly decumbent growth habit when compared to Southpa. Blades are thick, 10 to 30 cm



long, 5 to 12 mm wide, flat, involute toward the tip, the margins smooth. Small quantities of poor quality seed are produced on compact panicles.

The plants are salt tolerant and are an excellent choice for use in combination with crosswalks and snow fence for beach/dune projects for beach/dune projects.

Bitter panicum is stimulated by the accumulation of fresh sand continually blown inland from the shore. The sand either mechanically or nutritionally stimulates the growth of new shoots and tillers which keep pace with the accumulation. If the sand supply is choked off, as on the leeward parts of a foredune, the plants appear nutrient-deficient after several years.

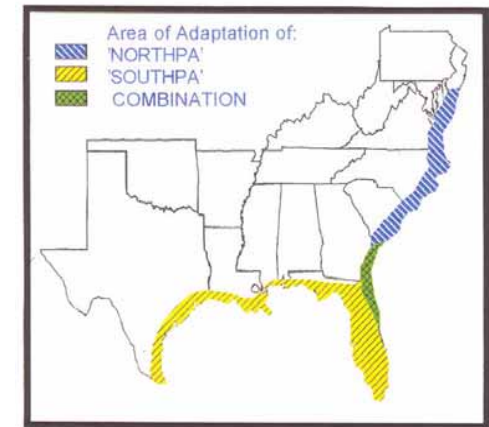
Use

The principle conservation use of Northpa and Southpa (pronounced Northpay/Southpay) bitter panicum (*Panicum amarum*) is wind erosion, beach stabilization, sand dune stabilization, and wildlife cover for birds. It is primarily vegetatively propagated, and spreads by rhizomes. Bitter panicum traps sand, but resists being covered. Aerial stems that are covered will take root and strengthen the old plant and give rise to new ones.

Adaptation

The bitter panicums Northpa and Southpa grow best on frontal coastal sand dunes. Northpa is adapted to cooler climates from New Jersey south to North Florida and

Texas, on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Southpa is adapted along the Gulf coast from Florida to Texas and to Georgia along the Atlantic coast.



Establishment

Freshly dug bare root tillers, rooted stem cuttings, or unrooted stem cutting may be used as planting material. Optimal time for planting of cuttings is late fall; young tillers, late spring (beginning of rainy season); potted plants, late winter or early spring. Bury unrooted stems end to end in trenches 4-6 inches deep and 2-3 feet apart leaving the top 6-10 inches of the stem exposed. Plant unrooted cuttings three to

a hole in staggered rows 2-3 feet apart with holes 2 feet apart in each row. Potted plants and bare root plants should be planted in staggered rows 2-3 feet apart with plants 2 feet apart in each row. Place plants 8-10 inches or deeper to moist soil. Place one ounce of slow release fertilizer such as Osmocote in each hole as material is planted, or apply 200-300 pounds of 10-10-10 fertilizer 3-4 weeks after planting. Apply the same rate and kind June 1-15 and August 1-15 annually until the stand fills in the spacing.



Irrigation is beneficial until plantings become established. Planted areas should be restricted from traffic.

Availability

Northpa and Southpa information can be obtained by contacting the Brooksville Plant Materials Center.

For More Information

Brooksville Plant Materials Center
14119 Broad Street
Brooksville, Florida 34601
Phone: 352-796-9600
<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/flpmc/>

or

Plant Materials Specialist for Florida
P.O. Box 141510
Gainesville, FL 32614
Phone: 352-338-9544

or

any USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service office

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audio tape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Revised March 2006



Northpa and Southpa

Bitter Panicum

Panicum amarum



Brooksville Plant Materials Center, Florida