

Mississippi Wildflower Seed Program – A Partnership between the USDA-NRCS Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center and the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission

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In 1996, the Mississippi Legislature authorized implementation of the Wildflower Seed Revolving Fund. This fund was created to allow the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission (MSWCC) to acquire wildflower seeds produced by the USDA-NRCS Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center (PMC), thus establishing the Native Wildflower Conservation Program. This program allows the Soil and Water Conservation Districts within the state to distribute wildflower seeds to the public and acts as a source of funding for the districts. It also allows seed production costs to be returned to the PMC to supplement funds received for operating costs and has provided invaluable experience in seed production techniques, such as establishment methods, harvesting and seed cleaning requirements, for those wildflowers in the program. Currently six species are in large-scale field production, with two additional species in smaller production blocks. All wildflowers were originally collected from Mississippi populations and are often more suitable than seeds available from non-local commercial producers.