

MISSISSIPPI WILDFLOWER SEED PROGRAM – A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN
THE USDA-NRCS JAMIE L. WHITTEN PLANT MATERIALS CENTER AND THE
MISSISSIPPI SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Janet Grabowski*, USDA-NRCS Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center, 2533 CR 65,
Coffeeville, MS 38922-2652

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 purchase wildflower seeds from 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 production techniques. Currently six species are in major production, with three additional species either being increased or in smaller-scale production. All wildflowers were originally collected from Mississippi populations and are often more suitable than seeds available from non-local commercial producers.

Presented at the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists, Southern Region of the American Society for Horticultural Science, Fort Worth, Texas, January 27-31, 2001