

NPDC NewsNote

A periodic note for NRCS State PLANTS Coordinators
January 21, 2004



Symbols for Unknowns

As you gear up for surveys and inventories this spring, you may find the Symbols for Unknown list useful.

This is a reminder about the symbols available in PLANTS for “unknowns” in plant/vegetation surveys. The “Unknowns” list grew out of a request by the USFS to have standard “symbols” similar to Plant Symbols for unknown in line transects and plots. Several years ago, NRCS,

USFS, BLM, USGS, and others developed a list of universal items that might be picked up in a plant survey or inventory of a vegetation plot.

These symbols exist in PLANTS and begin with the number 2 to differentiate them from regular Plant Symbols. Examples are as follows:

2FA	=	Forb, annual
2BARE	=	Bare ground
2LC	=	Lichen, crustose
2MOSS	=	Moss
2SEBD	=	Shrub, evergreen, broadleaf, dicot
2TD	=	Tree, deciduous

There are several ways to obtain them.

1. **FAQ:** Click on FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) located on the Green Bar on the PLANTS Home Page. Scroll down and click on “[Do you have symbols for unknown plants?](#)” Click on “symbols for unknown plants” in the paragraph to bring up a list.

2. **Checklists & Searches:** Click on “Checklists & Searches” on the PLANTS Home Page. Click on “Symbol,” enter <2*> into the box, and click on “Display Results.” The list of unknown symbols will be produced.

3. PLANTS Download: In the near future, there will be a GSAT (Grazing Spatial Analysis Tool) download page accessible from the PLANTS Download area in the bottom right corner of the PLANTS Home Page. The Unknown Symbols file will be available here so that you can easily import them into the GSAT, Access or Excel.

Your Feedback is Requested

Please send comments regarding PLANTS, NPDC NewsNotes, or other plant-related issues to scott.peterson@usda.gov. USDA NRCS National Plant Data Center <<http://npdc.usda.gov>>

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