

Union Germplasm Purpletop

[*Tridens flavus* (L.) Hitchc.]

A Conservation Plant Released by the USDA NRCS Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center, Americus, Georgia



Union Germplasm Purpletop in Bloom

Union Germplasm Purpletop [*Tridens flavus* (L.) Hitchc.] was released in 2005 in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service in South Carolina.

Description

Union Germplasm purpletop is a native perennial warm-season bunch grass with short stout rhizomes. It has an upright habit with culms ranging in height from 3 to 5 feet. The leaves have elongate blades to 1.5 feet long and 0.5 inches wide. Nodes and internodes are glabrous. Flowers and seed are in an open panicle 5 to 15 inches long and 3 to 10 inches wide. Spikelets are purplish with 5 to 8 compressed flowers. Seeds are whitish yellow less than 1/8 inch long. Flowers appear in mid-September to early October. Seeds mature in mid-October to early November.

Source

Union Germplasm seed was collected near Union, South Carolina by members of the South Carolina Native Plant Society and employees of the U.S. Forest Service in South Carolina.

Conservation Uses

Union Germplasm is used by the U.S. Forest Service in South Carolina for erosion control, wildlife habitat improvement and native plant restoration. It can be part of a native grass mix for pollinator habitat improvement.

Area of Adaptation and Use

Union Germplasm should be adapted to upland sites in the Southeastern U.S. but it is especially adapted to

upland piedmont sites in South Carolina. It grows in nearly solid stands but it can also tolerate some competition from other native grasses and forbs on upland sites.

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

Seedbed preparation should begin well in advance of planting. Establish a weed-free seedbed with either tillage or herbicides. The planting site should be firm with accumulated soil moisture. Union Germplasm can be broadcast or drilled. For maximum ground coverage broadcast 10 pounds of pure live seed per acre or drill 7 to 8 pounds of pure live seed per acre. Planting time changes due to soils, landscape and elevation. Recommended planting dates range from early April to mid May. Under most soil conditions plant approximately 0.25 inches deep. It is adapted to moderately-well to well drained sites. Under low pH conditions apply enough lime to raise pH to approximately 6.0. Do not apply nitrogen during establishment since this will encourage weed competition. If needed, a complete fertilizer can be applied after stand establishment. Herbicides may be needed to control invasive weeds. Read herbicide labels carefully before application. Mowing is an effective management tool to reduce coverage of weedy plants especially invading hardwoods. During growing season do not mow lower than 6 to 8 inches and allow regrowth to 1.5 to 2 feet before repeat mowing. Prescribed burning reduces hardwood growth and recycles nutrients. NRCS specialists can assist landowners with plans to properly manage this grass.



Union Germplasm Purpletop on Erosion Control Planting

Ecological Considerations

This native plant release does not have any particular resistance to disease or insects beyond those commonly found in the species.

Seed Production

Seed of Union Germplasm purpletop is maintained by U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, Union South Carolina.

Availability

For conservation use: Seed is produced by the U.S. Forest Service Union, South Carolina.



Union Germplasm Purpletop Production Field

For more information, contact:
Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center
295 Morris Drive.
Americus, Georgia 31719:
Phone: 229-924-4499 ;
Fax: 229-924-0013

<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov>

Citation

Release brochure for Union Germplasm Purpletop [*Tridens flavus* (L.) Hitchc]. USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Jimmy Carter PMC . Americus, Georgia 31719. Published [September, 2012]

For additional information about this and other plants, please contact your local USDA Service Center, NRCS field office, or Conservation District <<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>>, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov/>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/>>

HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND

USDA IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER