

Availability

Plant material of Penn Center Germplasm Switchgrass is being maintained at the Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center in Americus, Georgia. Mepkin Abbey Nursery near Moncks Corner, South Carolina, is growing nursery stock for purchase by the public..



For More Information

Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center
295 Morris Drive
Americus, Georgia 31719
Phone: 229-924-4499
<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/gapmc/>

OR Contact

Your local USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service Office

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Penn Center Germplasm Switchgrass

Panicum virgatum



**Jimmy Carter
Plant Materials Center
Americus, Georgia**

Description

Penn Center Germplasm Switchgrass *Panicum virgatum* L is a native perennial warm-season bunchgrass that grows from short rhizomes. Stems range in size from 2 to 5 mm in diameter. Green to yellowish green leaves can reach 35 cm long and 15 mm wide. Plant height can reach 1 to 2 meters tall including inflorescence panicle. Mature inflorescence panicles are broad and open. Inflorescence can range in color from purple to light tan. The spikelet



contains a sterile lemma and palea and a fertile lemma and palea. In September the fertile lemma and palea contain one seed about 1 to 2 mm long. The National List of Plant Species That Occur in Wetlands: Southeast (Region 2) indicates it is a facultative (FAC+) hydrophytic plant. It is listed as native to the lower 48 states. Native populations occur along the transition between high salt marsh and maritime forest.

Development and Adaptation

Penn Center Germplasm switchgrass is a native source identified release which has undergone no purposeful selection pressure. It is most adapted to the outer coastal plain of South Carolina and Georgia MLRA 153 B.

History, Establishment and Management

Penn Center Germplasm switchgrass commemorates the South Carolina coastal community of Penn Center. Penn Center is a significant national historic site recognizing civil rights milestones and efforts of Dr. Martin Luther King. Commercial and residential development in this area presents many soil erosion problems. Disturbed areas can be planted to this new switchgrass. **Planting rate:** Rootstocks can be planted to 3 foot rows and 2 to 3 feet within rows for moderate coverage. **Planting date:** Losses from heat stress can occur when stock is planted in the hot summer months. Suggested planting dates extend from late February to April. Rootstock and potted material can be planted by hand or with the aid of a modified tree planter. **Planting Site:** Most planting sites will consist of sandy or sandy loam topsoils. Penn Center Germplasm should be able to tolerate spring high tides. It can grow into forest cover but excessive shade will

reduce stand and vigor. **Fertility:** A fertilizer containing P and K can be applied at establishment. To avoid weedy competition especially crabgrass delay use of N until after the switchgrass is well established. After establishment minimum or no fertilizer should be required. **Maintainance:** Irrigation may be necessary during establishment and possibly later if drought occurs. Herbicides may be required. Follow label directions. If mowing is necessary do not mow below 8 inches since vigor and stand can be reduced by repeated mowing.



Conservation Uses

Uses for Penn Center Germplasm include erosion control in disturbed residential and commercial areas along the coast. Especially in high salt marsh transitions to maritime forest.