

A solid stand can be planted base rate of 40 pure live seeds (PLS)/ft² or 6.5 pounds PLS per acre. Little bluestem plantings generally consists of 10-25 percent of a mixture and seldom more than 50 percent of a mixture for forage. Use no fertilizer the establishment year unless soil test indicates a deficiency of phosphorous (<15 PPM) and/or potassium (< 90 PPM), as this can encourage weed competition. The soil acidity should range from a PH minimum of 5.5 to a maximum of 8.4.

Seeding Rate (Seed Production)

Ozark Germplasm for seed production can be planted using several different row spacings, including 12, 24, 36 inch rows and as a solid stand. Seeding rates in rows are 40 PLS per linear foot. Seeding rate for 36 inch row spacing should be 2.2 pounds PLS per acre; for 24 inch row spacing the seeding rate should be 3.2 pounds PLS per acre and 6.5 pounds PLS per acre for the 12 inch and solid stand plantings. For best results seeding should be made in the spring of the year.



Little Bluestem Seed - Increments 1/16th inch

Management

Reduce weed competition by mowing over the height of the little bluestem plants or cultivating between the rows. There are chemicals labeled such as Imazapic (Plateau or Panoramic) for use on little bluestem with different restrictions. Consult your NRCS field office or local extension office for assistance with different herbicides and recommendations. Little bluestem responds well to prescribed burning.

Availability

Foundation seed of Ozark Germplasm is being produced in limited supply by the Elsberry Plant Materials Center.

For More Information

Visit our Plant Materials website at <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> to find more information on solving conservation problems using plants.

USDA-NRCS
Elsberry Plant Materials Center
2803 N. Highway 79
Phone: (573) 898 2012

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Ozark Germplasm Little Bluestem *Schizachyrium scoparium*, Michx



A Selected Class
Conservation Plant
Developed By
The Elsberry
Plant Materials Center
Elsberry, Missouri

Ozark Germplasm Little Bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*, Michx.

Little bluestem is a native perennial warm-season grass. It is a major component of the shortgrass prairie and a minor component of the tallgrass prairie. Ozark Germplasm little bluestem is a selected class of certified seed released by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Elsberry Plant Materials Center, in April 2010. Ozark Germplasm little bluestem was selected for forage quality and apparent quantity, and regrowth potential following defoliation, late maturity, vigor, and quick seedling emergence.

Ozark Germplasm is recommended for range and pasture seedings, prairie restoration, prairie landscaping, wildlife cover and roadside restoration.

Description

Ozark Germplasm fits within the description of little bluestem. It is a medium tall, native perennial warm-season bunch grass with coarse stems and basal leaves. Little bluestem is easily mistaken for common broomsedge. Ozark Germplasm plants are 3 1/2 to 5 feet tall, erect, and slender to robust, with compressed stems. They have flat bluish basal shoots, which are somewhat bulbous at the bottom. Plants are green, but are often purplish at the base. Ozark Germplasm is generally planted in a mixture for forage production with other native warm season species like big bluestem, switchgrass, and indiangrass; the stem and the entire plants have a reddish cast after frost. Leaves are nearly hairless except for a small turf at the junction of sheath and blade, and tend to fold with maturity. Seed heads are in the form of racemes about 3 inches long. The raceme stems are hairy. Ozark Germplasm develops full stands where moisture is sufficient, but gets clumpy on drier sites.

Source

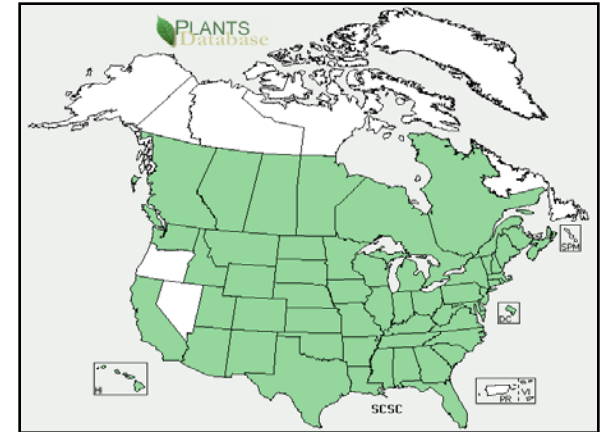
Little bluestem plants from three Major Land Resource Areas (MLRA's) are represented in Ozark Germplasm. These include Ozark Highland, (116A) had collections from 6 counties: Perry, Cape Girardeau, Ripley, Taney, Miller, and 2 collections from Maries county. Cherokee Prairies, (112) had collections from Barton and 2 collections from Pettis. Sothern Illinois Claypan Area (113) had 1 collection from Wayne county.



A close-up view of a flowering little bluestem plant.

Adaptation

Little bluestem is adapted to a wide variety of soils. It grows well on deep to shallow, sandy to fine-textured and rocky soils. It tolerates low rainfall and is often found on droughty sites. It is not tolerant to heavy shade. Ecotypes are adapted to areas with as little as 15 inches to over 50 inches of average annual precipitation.



Known Distribution

This map shows adaptation for little bluestem. This map was obtained from the USDA PLANTS database.

Area of Intended Use for Ozark Germplasm Little Bluestem

Ozark Germplasm Little Bluestem has performed well in a limited number of field plantings in Missouri. Ozark Germplasm is adapted to southern Missouri and southern Illinois and adjacent areas, and additional field plantings are scheduled in these areas.

Establishment

Ozark Germplasm Little Bluestem can be established by seed using a native grass drill. Plant seed in the spring into a firm weed free seedbed at a depth of 1/4 inch when the soil reaches 55 to 60 degrees F. A dormant seeding can be made in late November through February, with moderate to good success. The number of seeds per pound average 270,000.

Seeding Rate (Forage Production)

Little bluestem is generally planted in a mixture for forage production with other native warm season species like big bluestem, indiangrass and sideoats.