

Where to Obtain Information

Contact your local USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service Office for more information.

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

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July 2005

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United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Plant Materials Center

OK Select Germplasm Little Bluestem



An improved
conservation plant
selected by the James
E. "Bud" Smith Plant
Materials Center, Knox
City, Texas



OK Select Germplasm

little bluestem

Schizachyrium scoparium

OK Select Germplasm is released as a select class of certified seed (genetically manipulated track).

Origin

OK Select Germplasm little bluestem was originally collected in 1967 from native stands in Caddo, Grady, Jefferson, Stephens and Washita counties of southwestern Oklahoma. OK Select Germplasm was developed from seed collected from a polycross nursery of the original collections.

Potential Uses

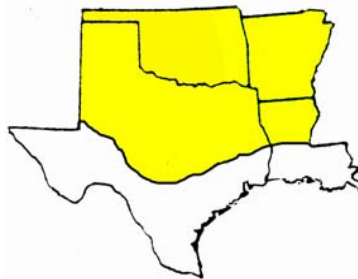
OK Select Germplasm may be used in pure stands for pasture and hay plantings or as a component in seed mixtures for range seeding. Its forage value is fair to good while young and tender. After seed maturation, forage becomes fair for cattle and horses. Wildlife can utilize the plants and seed for food and cover. The plants provide good ground nesting cover for quail.

OK Select Germplasm may be utilized for filter strips, field borders, contour buffer strips, in riparian forest buffers for nitrogen and phosphorus uptake, and for erosion control plantings.

Plant Description

OK Select Germplasm little bluestem is a native, perennial, warm-season, bunchgrass. It was selected for its

seedling and plant vigor, leafiness and aggressiveness to crowd out weeds in critical areas. Average seed yield per acre for OK Select is 205 pounds with an average pure live seed (PLS) of 55%. Like all native little bluestems, OK Select takes two years after planting to produce seeds.



Area of Adaptation

OK Select Germplasm is adapted in throughout much of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana where little bluestem is commonly found. It grows well on deep, shallow, sandy, fine-textured, and rocky soil, but is not adapted to saline sites or wet bottomlands

Establishment

Seedbed preparation should begin the year prior to a scheduled spring seeding. This tillage activity reduces weed pressure and increases your chances of a successful planting the first year. Plow and work the site as necessary the summer or early fall prior to establishment to create a firm weed-free seedbed. Tillage should be completed in the fall to allow time for the site to settle and accumulate moisture.

In areas of high erosion potential it is recommended to establish a dead litter cover crop the year prior to planting.

OK Select Germplasm little bluestem is best planted using a grass drill since grain drills cannot handle fluffy seeds. Broadcast seeding may be used in areas not accessible with a drill, but some type of additional soil disturbance is needed to insure seed-to-soil contact.

Seed should be planted no more than 1/4 inch deep on fine texture soils and to no more than 1/2 inch deep on coarse soils. On a straight seeding basis for drilling or broadcasting, 3.7 pounds PLS per acre should be planted. When planting in mixtures reduce the rate according to the percent of little bluestem in mixture.

Management

Plantings should be well established before livestock grazing is permitted. Established stands of OK Select should not be grazed or cut lower than 10 inches.

Prior to planting phosphorus and potash should be at a medium level according to soil test recommendations. Do not add more than 10 Lbs. of nitrogen per acre until the stand is evident.

Availability of Plant Materials

Generation 0 seed (equivalent to Breeder seed) will be maintained by the Plant Materials Center at Knox City. Field production (G1) seed for grower increase is available through the Texas Foundation Seed Service, Vernon, Texas (940) 552-6226.