

# PLANT CHAT

October 2022 Volume 23 Issue 1

A Newsletter Published by the Bismarck Plant Materials Center for NRCS Field Offices in North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota

## AVAILABLE PLANT MATERIALS FOR 2023

Field plantings are a way to evaluate plants or plant technology objectives under actual field use conditions. The following species are available for field testing in 2023 from the Bismarck Plant Materials Center. The seed/plants are available to any NRCS, Conservation District, or Tribal cooperators or partners. The Plant Materials Program will provide seed/plants and annual evaluation forms. It will be the responsibility of the sponsor and cooperator to do the seeding/planting and evaluations. Evaluations will be annually for 3 years. No evaluation is needed for sweetgrass. Request and additional information can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

Name	Species	Type	Material	Maximum amount per site	Purpose
Cupplant	<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	forb	seed	½ PLS pound	attracts pollinators
Virginia wildrye (Tober Germplasm)	<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	grass	seed	40 PLS pounds	quick vegetative cover
Sweetgrass	<i>Hierochloa odorata</i>	grass	plants (3" pots)	10 plants/project	culturally significant

### Cupplant (9094396)

**Description:** Cupplant is a native, perennial species of the tall grass prairie region, including far eastern North Dakota and South Dakota. It grows well in sandy, moist bottomlands, floodplains, near streambeds, and adjacent to open woodlands. Cupplant typically grows 3-8 feet tall with leaves that cup to hold water of rain or dew. The plant is attractive to pollinating insects.

**Evaluation Objective:** Test the performance and adaptation of species when planted for pollinator habitat or other conservation purposes.

**Seeding Season:** Spring or Dormant

**Seeding Rate:**

State	Pounds/acre (PLS)	Seeds/ft <sup>2</sup> (full rate)	% of mix (recommended)
Minnesota	10	5	1 - 5
North Dakota	10	5	1 - 5
South Dakota	10	5	1 - 5



Cupplant attracts pollinator species.

### Virginia wildrye (Tober Germplasm)

**Description:** Virginia wildrye is a native, cool-season, perennial bunchgrass. It is similar in appearance to Canada wildrye and can be found growing in the same locations. Virginia wildrye has shorter awns and straighter seedheads than Canada wildrye. Virginia wildrye prefers moist, heavier textured soils and can grow in sun or shade. It is considered short-lived but will reseed if allowed to grow to maturity. Drought tolerance is rated as fair. It will not tolerate saline conditions. It has excellent seedling vigor and establishes quickly. Tober Germplasm Virginia wildrye was released in 2020 by the Bismarck Plant Materials Center. It is a diverse population that was developed from native plant material collected at 78 sites across North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. Plant selection criteria included seed production, forage production, and lack of disease. Potential uses of Virginia wildrye include wildlife and pollinator habitat.

**Evaluation Objective:** (planting should meet one of the objectives listed below)

**--Promotion of the species on known adapted soils and sites**

Side-by-side comparisons of seedlings with and without Virginia wildrye on loam, overflow or sub-irrigated soils that are non-saline. Sites should be east of the Missouri River in North Dakota or South Dakota or any location in Minnesota.

**--Test performance of the species on soils other than those it is known to be adapted**

Seeding is to be on soils **other than** loam, overflow or sub-irrigated in eastern North Dakota, eastern South Dakota or any location in Minnesota.

**--Test performance of the species on soils and sites other than those it is known to be adapted**

Seeding can be on any soil type or location west of the Missouri River in North Dakota or South Dakota.

**Seeding Season:** Spring, Late Summer or Dormant

**Seeding Rate:**

State	MLRA	PLS pounds/acre (full rate)	% of mix (recommended)
Minnesota	All	consult MN Plant Materials contact	10
North Dakota	53A/B, 54, 55A/B, 56, 58C/D, 60B, 63A, 102A	10	10
South Dakota	53B/C, 55B/C, 56, 62, 63B, 66, 102A/B/C	13.6	10
South Dakota	54, 58D, 60A, 61, 63A, 64, 65	11.3	10



*Virginia wildrye seedheads*

**Sweetgrass (9063128)**

**Description:** Sweetgrass is an early, cool-season grass that is characteristic of wet, sandy soil near riverbanks and lakeshores. It spreads by underground rhizomes. Coumarin in the plant is the source of its sweet, vanilla scent. The plant is culturally significant to various Native American tribes. The sweetgrass accession being offered originated from plant materials collected along the Missouri River near Bismarck, North Dakota.

**Objective:** Create propagation beds that can be used locally to provide plants sustainably into the future.

**Planting Recommendations:** Space plants 1-3 feet apart on clean, weed-free site early in the spring. Water plants frequently until established.

**REQUESTING PLANT MATERIALS**

Requests should be sent to the point-of contact for plant materials in your State. Please **submit requests by December 1, 2022** for highest consideration. Requests after December 1 will receive lower priority. All requests are subject to availability, capacity, and justification.

**Forms for requesting:**

Species	Form to submit
Virginia wildrye	NRCS-ECS-9
cupplant	NRCS-ECS-9
sweetgrass	Special/Demonstration
demonstrations or special plantings	Special/Demonstration

**Responsibility:** The Plant Materials Program will provide seed/plants, annual evaluation forms, and technology assistance for planting and establishment. The sponsor and cooperator are responsible for seeding/planting and completing the annual evaluation form. Seedlings need to be evaluated annually for 3 years. No evaluation is needed for sweetgrass.

**Point of Contact for Plant Materials:**

State	Contact	Title	Address	Phone	email
Minnesota	Jeff Duchene	State Rangeland Management Specialist	USDA, NRCS 104 Frontier Drive Fergus Falls, MN 56537-1023	651-212-1977	jeff.duchene@usda.gov
Minnesota	Callie Bertsch	State Forester	USDA, NRCS 375 Jackson St STE 600 Saint Paul, MN 55101-1854	651-602-7861	callie.bertsch@usda.gov
North Dakota	Edward Bahm	Plant Materials Specialist	USDA, NRCS 3308 University Drive Bismarck, ND 58504	701-989-6122	edward.bahm@usda.gov
South Dakota	Emily Helms	State Rangeland Management Specialist	USDA, NRCS 414 Stumer Rd Rapid City, SD 57701	605-570-2180	emily.helms@usda.gov

**Other Plantings:** Other seed/plant materials are available from the Plant Materials Program for demonstration, education and research. Foundation seed is also available to seed growers. For more information on field plantings, demonstration plantings, cultural plantings, special plantings, or Foundation seed, contact Edward Bahm, Plant Materials Specialist at [edward.bahm@usda.gov](mailto:edward.bahm@usda.gov) or phone 701-989-6122.