



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

Borden County Germplasm Sand Dropseed

Sporobolus cryptandrus (Torr.) A. Gray

A Conservation Plant Release by USDA NRCS James E. "Bud" Smith Plant Materials Center, Knox City, TX



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Borden County Germplasm sand dropseed, [*Sporobolus cryptandrus* (Torr.) A. Gray] was released from the James E. "Bud" Smith Plant Materials Center in Knox City, Texas in 2000.

Description

Sand dropseed is a weak, perennial, warm-season, native bunchgrass. Plants are slender, 1- 3 ft tall with an open densely flowered panicle. The most identifiable characteristic of this grass is the long, dense hairs at the collar. Distinct "flag-like-leaves" are usually present at a right angle to the stem. The leaf blades are flat about 1/8 inch wide and taper toward the tip. Leaf blades roll inward as plants mature. Plants reproduce from seed and small tillers. Sand dropseed produces a dense root system which can spread up to 2 feet laterally and 8 feet deep.

Source

Borden County Germplasm was originally collected from native plants located approximately 12 miles west of Gail, TX in Borden County Texas.

Conservation Uses

Borden County Germplasm may be used as a component in seed mixtures for range seeding. Sand dropseed reseeds itself on ranges following overgrazing or drought. It has the potential for use in many vegetative practices such as contour buffer strips, cross wind trap strips, riparian herbaceous cover, filter strips, and critical area plantings. It may be used for stabilizing sandy soils that have high erosion potential. Its forage value is fair to good for grazing livestock during the early growth stages, but palatability declines rapidly as the plant matures. Wildlife can utilize the plant for food and ground nesting cover.

Area of Adaptation

Borden County Germplasm is adapted to a wide range of soil types, but will perform best on sandy, rocky and silty, and coarse gravelly soils. Sand dropseed is extremely drought tolerant and is adapted to sites that receive 7-16 inches of precipitation annually.

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

The full seedling rate for Borden County Germplasm is 1.0 pound of pure live seed per acre. When planting this as a component of a seed mixture, the seeding rate should be adjusted to the desired percent of the mix. Seed should be placed ¼ to ½ inch deep.

Seedbed preparation should begin the year prior to spring planting to reduce weed problems during the first year of establishment. Work the site as necessary during the summer or early fall prior to establishment to create a firm weed-free seedbed. Work should be completed in the fall to allow time for the soil to settle and accumulate moisture. Minimum and no-till operations should use herbicide applications to control weeds.

Plantings should be well established before livestock grazing is permitted. Twelve months of grazing deferment should give plants enough time to become established. Established stands should not be grazed lower than 5-6 inches, depending upon the prescribed grazing system. Contact your local USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service field office for assistance in planning and applying prescribed grazing plans.

Soil tests should be conducted to determine the amount of fertilizer applied to sustain a medium level. Nitrogen should not be used during the establishment year because it will encourage weed growth. Weeds may be controlled by mowing or with herbicides. Consult your local extension weed specialist for recommendations on herbicides for sand dropseed.

Seed and Plant Production

Borden County Germplasm is harvested by either direct combining, or with a seed stripper. Average seed yield at Knox City is 500 pounds per acre with a summer and fall harvest.

Availability

For conservation use: Seed is available from several commercial seed companies.

For seed or plant increase: Generation zero (G0) seed (equivalent to Breeder seed) will be maintained by the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Center in Knox City, Texas and is available through the Texas Foundation Seed Service in Vernon, Texas, phone number (940) 552-6226.



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Citation

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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/>>



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