



Potter County Germplasm Spike Dropseed *Sporobolus contractus*

Plant Introduction

Spike dropseed (*Sporobolus contractus*) is a perennial, warm-season, native bunchgrass which is native to the southwestern United States. Plants grow in small clumps with erect stems that reach a height up to 36 inches tall. Spike dropseed has a characteristic densely contracted panicle which range in length from 6-18 inches long and ½ inch wide.

Availability of Plant Materials

Generation Zero (G0) seed (equivalent to Breeder seed) will be maintained by the NRCS James E. "Bud" Smith Plant Materials Center near Knox City, Texas. Field production (G1) seed for grower increase is available through the Texas Foundation Seed Service in Vernon, Texas, phone number 940.552.6226.

For More Information

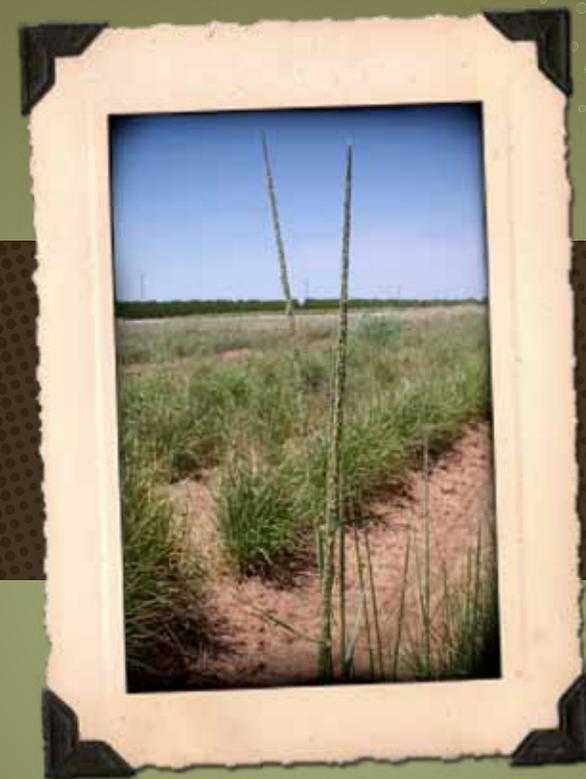
Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service Office at the USDA Service Center for more information or visit the web at: <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> to find more information on solving conservation problems using plants.

USDA-NRCS
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POTTER COUNTY GERmplasm SPIKE DROPSEED

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

Potter County Germplasm is released as a
selected class of certified seed (naturally selected track)

Use and Adaptation

Potter County Germplasm spike dropseed is adapted to a wide range of soil types, but will perform best on sandy loam, loamy fine sands and silty soils. Spike dropseed reseeds itself readily on ranges following overgrazing or drought. It may be used for stabilizing sandy soils that have high erosion potential. Its forage value is fairly palatable to all livestock. Wildlife can utilize the plants for food and ground nesting cover. Upland birds also feed on the mature seed produced from spike dropseed.

Potter County Germplasm may be used in pure stands or as a component in seed mixtures for range restoration. It has a potential for use in pasture plantings, filter strips, erosion control plantings, and critical area plantings. The anticipated areas of adaptation is Major Land Resource Areas (MLRAs) 42, 77, 78, 80A,B, and the northern areas of 81A,B, in west and southwestern Texas and western Oklahoma.

Origin

Potter County Germplasm spike dropseed was originally collected in 1984 from native plants located in the Canadian River bottomland approximately 18 miles north of Amarillo, TX (N. Lat. 35° 28' 30", W Long 101° 48' 30") in Potter County Texas. It was released from the James E. "Bud" Smith Plant Materials Center, Knox City, TX in 2000.

Planting Method

Seedbed preparation should begin the year prior to a scheduled spring seeding of Potter County Germplasm. This will help increase the chances of not having severe weed problems the first year of establishment. Prepare the site as necessary 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 site to settle and accumulate moisture.



Spike dropseed is best planted using a grass drill. Broadcast seeding may be used in areas not easily covered by a grass drill, but some type of additional soil disturbance will be beneficial to insure seed-to-soil contact, such as cultipacking and harrowing after planting. There are approximately 2,885,000 seed per pound of spike dropseed.

Seed should be planted no more than 1/8 inch deep on fine texture soils and no more than 1/2 inch deep on coarse soils. Seeding rates for drilling or broadcasting should be 1.0 pound of pure live seed (PLS) per acre. In planting mixtures reduce the rate according to the percent of spike dropseed desired in the mixture.

Management

Plantings should be well established before livestock grazing is permitted. Good stands can be grazed the first winter and continue thereafter throughout the year as with other grasses. Stands should not be grazed or cut lower than 5-6 inches. Contact your local NRCS office for assistance in planning and applying a prescribed grazing plan.