

Marsh Notes

Finding Vegetative
Solutions for
Conservation
Problems



USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center

A Visit from Hurricane Isaac

The Plant Materials Center encountered the fury of Mother Nature on August 28, 2012. Hurricane Isaac's eye wall passed right over the Center as a Category 1 hurricane. For the most part the Center fared the storm well with the exception of several downed power lines and minor damage to greenhouses. Over the course of the storm, the Center received 10 to 12 inches of rainfall which minimally affected any of the plants in the field. With relief, the 2012 hurricane season is almost at its end.

Outreach for Coastal Roots Program

Two scientists from Louisiana State University (LSU) came out to the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center and volunteered their time to collect bitter panicum (*Panicum amarum*) stems to be used by the [LSU Coastal Roots Program](#). Azure Bevington, a research associate with Coastal Roots and Carey Gelpi, a post-doctoral researcher in the School of the Coast and Environment collected a total of 400 stems. The stems will be divided up and delivered to participating schools where they will be cut and propagated by the students. Each Coastal Roots school has a nursery on site where they grow their own seedlings for planting at a designated restoration site. There are currently 41 schools in the program and 8 of these schools are growing bitter panicum collected from the PMC. The other schools are growing a variety of native swamp and bottomland hardwood trees, as well as coastal prairie plants. The cuttings will be tended by the students in the nurseries for about 1 year, and thereafter, the school groups will take them to their restoration partner site where they will be planted. The bitter panicum grown by these schools will be planted on restored dune habitat at Grand Isle State Park and Holly Beach, in Cameron Parish.



South Lafourche Levee Follow Up

Earlier this summer the South Lafourche Levee District called upon the PMC for assistance in stabilizing grass seed recently sown along the hurricane levee system. The PMC was able to provide erosion control matting to demonstrate its use protecting the crowns of the levee system. The matting was highly effective allowing seed to stay in place for improved seed germination. The before and after pictures above depict the benefits the matting provided to the crowns of the levee system, where seed would have otherwise been displaced by wind and/or water. Further field trials will be conducted in the future to continue the studies initial multi conservation objectives.



The Mission of the NRCS Plant Materials Program:

We develop and transfer plant materials and plant technology for the conservation of natural resources. In working with a broad range of plant species, including grasses, forbs, trees, and shrubs, the program seeks to address priority needs of field offices and land managers in both public and private sectors. Emphasis is focused on using native plants as a sustainable way to solve conservation problems and protect ecosystems.

If you would like more information call us at (985) 475-5280 or visit our web site at <http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/lapmc>

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Green Facts

"In most cases nature has evolved a plant for almost every growing condition."

Dr. Franklin J. Crider

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PMC VEG QUIZ

Can you identify this native species?



Answer in next publication

Answer to Summer 2012 PMC Veg Quiz:
Gulf Muhly (*Muhlenbergia capillaries*)



Voice of the Wetlands 2012



The annual Voice of the Wetlands Festival held in Houma, LA celebrated and promoted the culture, music and people of Southern Louisiana. The

festival serves as an educational forum about the resource concerns and values of Louisiana's wetlands. Garret Thomassie and Curt Riche' served as representatives for NRCS's Plant Materials Center to answer questions and distribute information to the public regarding a variety of effective materials and methods the center uses to protect and restore the coast of Louisiana vegetatively. A booth consisting of the PMC's vegetative releases and publications were on display. The NRCS booth received approximately 1300 visitors over the entire weekend.

LSU's Ocean Commotion

On October 30, 2012, the NRCS Denham Springs Field Office personnel and the NRCS Plant Materials Center participated in Louisiana State University's Sea Grant College Program, "Ocean Commotion." Ocean Commotion is a one-day educational event celebrating Louisiana's

coastal and marine resources. More than 2,000 K-8 grade students and teachers from schools throughout Louisiana were in attendance.



A colorful display depicted the NRCS partnership with the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) to protect and restore Louisiana's coastal wetlands. The display contained a few of the projects that were implemented. Examples

included are as follows: CWPPRA's sediment and nutrient trapping project, CWPPRA's marsh creation and marsh nourishment project, and CWPPRA's shoreline protection and stabilization project.

Additionally, the PMC had live display plants consisting of its 8 releases that are mandated for these CWPPRA contracts.

The following persons: Curt J. Riche', Assistant Manager of Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center; Brandon Waltman, MLRA Soil Scientist of Denham Springs; Joy Sims, Soil Con Trainee, Denham Springs; Henry Bell, Soil Conservation Technician of Denham Springs, and Sam Willis, District Conservationist of Denham Springs all assisted with the event.

Students were provided with Sammy Soil and Farmer Ryan activity booklets and teachers received brochures of different plant species in addition to educational pamphlets to be used in their classrooms.

Plant Release Distributions for 2012

In 2012, there were a total of 16 licensed commercial growers that received the Center's following plant releases. These allocations will allow the growers to exponentially increase their stocks over the next five years to fulfill a multitude of different contracts that demand these vegetative releases.

SPECIES	TOTAL
'Vermilion' smooth cordgrass	16,500 plants
Brazoria Germplasm seashore paspalum	550 plants
'Gulf Coast' marsh hay cordgrass	2,750 plants
Fourchon Germplasm bitter panicum	1,500 stems
Caminada Germplasm seaoats	120-10 gallon containers
Bayou Lafourche Germplasm California bulrush	240-1 gallon containers
Timbalier Germplasm gulf bluestem	600 plants
Pelican Germplasm black mangrove	100 pounds seed

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www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov



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