

# Cochise Germplasm

## Spike Dropseed (*Sporobolus contractus*)

### *Native Grasses for Conservation*

#### **TUCSON PLANT MATERIALS CENTER**

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Spike dropseed is a native perennial bunchgrass 1.5 to 4 ft tall with a spikelike inflorescence. It is found in deep sandy bottoms and uplands between 200 and 7000 ft elevation.

Cochise is a genetically diverse population of Spike dropseed, composed of 44 collections from southeastern Arizona, southern Nevada and western New Mexico. It is a selected class of germplasm developed through the Convergent-Divergent Plant Improvement Strategy (CDI). Plant material was brought to a common point

(the PMC) where equal numbers of plants were planted into a polycross block (convergence), from which equal quantities of seed were harvested and propagated. These plants were then planted in diverse environments to allow a natural selection for adapted plants (divergence). Seed from the plants that survived at the divergent sites within Arizona were used to establish a seed increase field. Cochise is adapted for use in southern Arizona, and may be used as a native replacement for Lehmann lovegrass (*Eragrostis lehmanianna*).

Seed of Cochise germplasm is available through the Tucson Plant Materials Center or your local NRCS office.



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