United States Department of Agriculture

A Conservation Plant Released by the Natural Resources Conservation Service
Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center, Galliano, Louisiana

Caminada Germplasm

Seaoats

Uniola paniculata L.

Figure 1. Photo of Caminada Germplasm seaoats

Caminada Germplasm seaoats (*Uniola paniculata* L.) is a pre-varietal release from the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 2001.

Description

Caminada Germplasm seaoats is a native, warm-season, semi-tropical, perennial grass dominating many beach and dune environments. It grows erect to approximately 6 feet in height at maturity. Leaves are narrow (<1 inch), can grow up to approximately 24 inches in length, and taper at the ends. The ends of the leaves are often browned and curled upward in appearance. Caminada Germplasm seaoats produces a large seed head (panicle) during the summer. The panicles are made of many flat spikelets containing seed greenish in color. As the plant matures, usually in late summer, the panicles ultimately turn tan in color. The plant has nodes (bulges) on the stem located near or at the soil surface. The nodes will often root down and anchor to the soil surface as wind born sediments, such as sand, accumulates around the plant. Caminada Germplasm seaoats vegetatively spread by rhizomes. The rhizomes have a scale-like appearance when young, and can be seen as pale yellow, sharp, stiff and protrusions near the base of the plant.

Source

Caminada Germplasm seaoats originates and was collected from a naturally occurring colony of seaoats located on Fourchon Beach in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. A small colony of plants was found growing on a low-profile beach dune in 1995. Caminada Germplasm seaoats has persisted and stabilized beach dunes through several catastrophic weather events that have caused considerable erosion, plant community loss, and damage to the beach. Dominant plants found in association include Bitter panicum (*Panicum amarum*) Ell. Var *amarum* and Marshhay cordgrass (*Spartina patens*) (Ait.) Muhl. Performance testing in 1997 to 1999 has resulted in Caminada Germplasm seaoats to be more tolerant to salt spray, storm surges and rapid sand accretion in comparison to other plants found at this site.

Conservation Uses

Erosion control: Caminada Germplasm seaoats produce massive root systems and is considered a clump grass. The plant will tolerate salt spray and brief inundation of salt water. The massive root system is a great stabilizer on higher elevations of sand dunes. Due to its ability to tolerate salt spray around the coast, its leaves and stems intercept blowing sands and reducing beach wind erosion. Burial of the plants base by blowing sand actually stimulates plant growth and increases rhizomes to spread.

Area of Adaptation and Use

Caminada Germplasm seaoats is intended for use on coastal beaches and barrier islands of the north central Gulf coast, primarily Louisiana west of the Mississippi River. Caminada Germplasm seaoats performs best when planted on the crest and Gulf side of sand dunes. However, plants have been successfully established and performed well on the leeward side of dunes as well. For a current distribution map, please consult the Plant Profile page for this species on the PLANTS Website.

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings
Caminada Germplasm seaoats produce a large number of seed, however, a very small percentage of the seed is actually viable. For conservation plantings, Caminada Germplasm seaoats are established vegetatively because seed is not readily available.

Caminada Germplasm seaoats is established from container grown or bare rooted plant stock. Container grown plants are generally more reliable in successfully establishing stands of seaoats. Rooted stems from established plants are divided for propagation. Container size can vary depended upon how divisions are made. Sand to sandy loam potting medium is preferred; however, sand peat mix, river sand or peat and pine bark can used as a medium as well.

Plantings have traditionally been established by planting on 2 to 5 foot centers between plants. Spacing is usually dependent on the size of the area and the amount of protection desired. If fertilization is desired, use a slow release fertilizer or broadcast a general blend of fertilizer such as 13-13-13 soon after planting.

Ecological Considerations
Caminada Germplasm seaoats is selected and propagated from naturally occurring germplasm and has not been altered from the original collection. It does not meet the assessment requirements of a plant which could become invasive based on guidelines adopted by the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Program.

Seed and Plant Production
Caminada Germplasm seaoats is a clonal release and must be propagated vegetatively; seed is not available. Divisions of stems and roots from established mature plants is how the plant is propagated. Container grown propagated material can be planted year-round, however better results are achieved by planting mid-winter to early spring. Bare-root propagules should be planted November through March. Foundation seed of this release is not available, and seed is not to be used for plant increase or establishment.

Availability
For conservation use: Containerized Caminada Germplasm seaoats is available through commercial wetland plant growers.

For seed or plant increase: Foundation planting stock of Caminada Germplasm seaoats is available for commercial nursery production from the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center. This release is established vegetatively, so plants are propagated by plant division. Rooted container stock of any size provides the highest probability of survival and planting success.

For more information, contact:
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https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/plantmaterials/pmc/southeast/lapmc/

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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>