



# Seed News

## New Plant Release

South Dakota State University recently announced the release of 'Sholty' yellow-flowered alfalfa (*Medicago sativa* subsp. *falcata*). The Bismarck and Rose Lake Plant Materials Centers (PMC) assisted in the evaluation process for Sholty, and are listed as cooperators in the release. Sholty produces high amounts of forage in semiarid regions: 1) from a delayed single harvest per growing season management system in the northern Great Plains (North Dakota and South Dakota), and 2) from a 2-harvest system in the sub-humid Great Lakes Region (Michigan). It is more persistent than conventional hay type or pasture type alfalfas under dryland grazing.



**'Sholty' yellow-flowered alfalfa**

The Bismarck PMC found Sholty superior to other drought and cold tolerant hay and pasture cultivars. Sholty is an indeterminate flowering legume that has the ability to accumulate large amounts of forage after first flower, and retain leaves from first flower until July 20. Its 'bowl-shaped' growth habit makes it highly suitable for nesting cover for pheasants and other game birds. Sholty performed extremely well in a multi-year PMC grass/legume field trial at Bison, South Dakota. Foundation seed will be managed by the South Dakota Foundation Seed Stocks Division, Brookings, South Dakota. Breeder seed will be maintained by South Dakota State University.

Foundation seed will be made available on an exclusive basis to seed producers who contractually agree to produce and market the seed using the name Sholty.

### Who We Are

The Bismarck Plant Materials Center (PMC) is one of 27 PMCs operated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The Bismarck PMC serves the States of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. It is the mission of the plant materials program to develop plant materials and plant science technology for the conservation of our natural resources. The Bismarck PMC was established in 1954 as part of the Soil Conservation Service, now Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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## Potential Future Releases

The PMC is currently evaluating several species for future release. These include Virginia wildrye, Indiangrass, prairie dropseed, cupplant and sand bluestem. The Virginia wildrye selection is closest to possible release, as soon as 2018. Currently, there are no releases of a northern source Virginia wildrye available in the marketplace. The PMC selection has a broad genetic base sourced from plants collected from 77 counties in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. It has performed well at the PMC and in various field plantings in the PMC's three-state service area. There is a good supply of this seed currently available to ensure ample supplies of seed upon release. It will again be offered in limited quantities for field plantings, and is currently being evaluated in conservation field trials in Minnesota and South Dakota. The PMC is in the process of reselecting for specific traits in the other species listed above.

## Vendor Lists

The PMC continues to maintain two seed vendor lists: 1) the [Conservation Seed/Plant Vendor List -- MN, ND, and SD](#), and 2) the [Prairie Landscaping Seed/Plant Vendor List -- MN, ND and SD](#). These lists can be accessed via the web links above or at the [Bismarck PMC publications webpage](#) under the 'other publications' category. If you are aware of additional providers that should be considered for one or both of these lists, please contact the PMC with that information.

## Growers of Bismarck PMC Releases

Seed production was quite variable in 2015. After a dry winter and early spring, the bulk of growing season precipitation fell during May and June. As a result, most cool-season grass species produced good seed crops, while production for some of the warm-season species suffered from below normal summer precipitation. The PMC relies on irrigation water to fill precipitation voids, but the entire system is still being renovated in the aftermath of the 2011 Missouri River flood. In addition to a lack of sufficient irrigation, there are several other factors that limit PMC foundation

seed production and availability in any one year. They include: a limited land base, plot isolation, plot rotation, herbicide persistence, grassy weed concerns, and available labor. And, there is always the unpredictability of grower demand. As a result, there are years when seed of some varieties is not available. The following table lists seed prices and availability of each foundation seed release that is maintained by the Bismarck PMC. Of the five grass varieties currently unavailable, note that a new field of 'Dacotah' switchgrass was established in 2015 and seed should be available in 2017. New production fields of 'Tomahawk' Indiangrass and 'Lodorm' green needlegrass are scheduled to be seeded this spring. Hopefully, seed will be available in 2018 (a field of 'Lodorm' seeded in 2013 was destroyed due to species contamination issues). The status of adding new production fields of forbs is not determined at this time.

## Order Information 2016

Listed in the table are prices of Foundation and Select Class grass and forb seed produced by the Bismarck PMC. This seed is for sale through NDSU Foundation Seedstocks to commercial seed growers for the sole purpose of certified seed production. To order seed, contact [wayne.markegard@nd.usda.gov](mailto:wayne.markegard@nd.usda.gov) or call (701) 530-2075 or (701) 250-4330. All seed prices are subject to change. Once ordered, a confirmation letter will be sent from the PMC and billing will be sent from NDSU Foundation Seedstocks. Payment in full to NDSU Foundation Seedstocks must be received before seed shipment. Prices are based on a Pure Live Seed (PLS) pound. Shipping charges (in the U.S.) will be \$1.00/PLS pound.

RELEASES	CLASS*	COMMON NAME	COST/PLS LB	AVAILABILITY
<b>Native Warm-Season Grasses</b>			<b>U. S. Dollars</b>	
Badlands Ecotype	Select (G2)	little bluestem	18.00	good
Itasca Germplasm	Select (G2)	little bluestem	18.00	limited
Bad River Ecotype	Select (G2)	blue grama	20.00	none
Bison	Foundation	big bluestem	8.00	good
Bonilla	Foundation	big bluestem	8.00	good
Bounty Germplasm	Select (G1)	big bluestem	8.00	good
Dacotah	Foundation	switchgrass	9.00	none
Forestburg	Foundation	switchgrass	9.00	good
Pierre	Foundation	sideoats grama	13.00	good
Red River Germplasm	Select (G1)	prairie cordgrass	80.00	limited
Tomahawk	Foundation	Indiangrass	18.00	none
<b>Native Cool-Season Grasses</b>				
Lodorm	Foundation	green needlegrass	13.00	none
Mandan	Foundation	Canada wildrye	10.00	good
Rodan	Foundation	western wheatgrass	12.00	none
<b>Introduced Grasses</b>				
Mankota	Foundation	Russian wildrye	9.00	good
Nordan	Foundation	crested wheatgrass	5.00	good
Manifest	Foundation	intermediate wheatgrass	7.00	good
Manska	Foundation	pubescent wheatgrass	7.00	good
Reliant	Foundation	intermediate wheatgrass	7.00	good
<b>Native Forbs/Legumes</b>				
Bismarck Germplasm	Select (G1)	narrow-leaved purple coneflower	300.00	good
Bismarck Germplasm	Select (G1)	purple prairieclover	35.00	none
Bismarck Germplasm	Select (G1)	stiff sunflower	250.00	none
Medicine Creek Germplasm	Select (G1)	Maximilian sunflower	50.00	good

\*Generation number for select class materials is shown in parentheses (G1 = generation 1).