



PLANT MATERIALS PROGRAM BRIEFS

**JIMMY CARTER PLANT MATERIALS CENTER
AMERICUS, GEORGIA**

JULY 2004

Plant Materials Team

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Leon Brooks, (L) District Conservationist and H. Jerome Jones, (R) landowner, Willow Oaks Farm

H. Jerome Jones, landowner, is using plant materials provided by the Jimmy Carter PMC to improve wildlife habitat and to control soil erosion on critical slopes adjacent to the newly constructed duck pond. Native grasses, such as, switchgrass, indiagrass, and little bluestem, in addition to other non-native species will be planted to enhance quail habitat. 'Dove' Proso millet, sunflower, and 'Atlantic' coastal panicgrass will be planted for dove habitat. Food plots and conservation buffers are also planned. The assembly of plant materials for this project involved not only the Jimmy Carter PMC in Americus, but also the Brooksville (FL) and Cape May (NJ) Plant Materials Centers.

contents

July 2004



COVER STORY

Cover Story: Willow Oaks Farm/ 2
Plant Materials to improve wildlife habitat in
Columbia County, Georgia

FEATURES



Native Plant Releases/ 3

- Newberry Germplasm Indiangrass
- Durham Germplasm Switchgrass
- Union Germplasm Purpletop



Farm Bill Support/ 9

PMC Website features plant information to support
farm bill programs

Outreach Initiative/ 9

Fort Valley State University's
Small Farm Initiative



Outdoor Classroom/ 13

Southwest Georgia School

Schedule of Events/ 14

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PLANT MATERIALS PROGRAM BRIEFS

WILLOW OAKS FARM



DOVE FIELD

Donald Surrency, Plant Materials Specialist, discusses plant materials plan with H. Jerome Jones, landowner. Dove field has been planted with 'Dove Proso' Millet and 'Atlantic' Coastal Panicgrass.



DUCK POND

Critical areas around pond, such as, edges, roads, steep banks, etc. will be planted to native warm season grasses developed by the Plant Materials Program.



Surrency reviews with Mr. Jones plant materials (seed) allocations that will be used for critical area stabilization and wildlife habitat improvement.



Ervin Hart, SCT for the NRCS Augusta Service Center, reviews conservation plan. The plan provides the latest plant technology developed by the Plant Materials Program as it pertains to planting guides and sources of plant materials.

NATIVE PLANT RELEASES

KINCHAFOONEE VIRGINIA WILDRYE



Kinchafoonee Virginia Wildrye Selected Class of Natural Germplasm is a native perennial cool season grass. It is a robust grass, which produces an attractive seed head in late spring. Virginia wildrye commonly occurs in low shaded woods; however, it also does well in full sunlight. Virginia wildrye has very long persistent awns and will not pass through conventional planting equipment unless the seed is debearded. Even after seed is debearded, seed will require native grass drill or broadcast spreader. Virginia wildrye is one of the few native cool season grasses useful in soil conservation work. Conservation uses can include field borders, logging roads, critical areas, restoration, and cool season cover.

NATIVE PLANT RELEASES

'HIGHLANDER' EASTERN GAMAGRASS



The Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center released 'Highlander' Eastern Gamagrass, and the Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center and the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station participated in the release as cooperators. Highlander is recommended for forage production. It is best used as a hay crop; however, it can be grazed if given appropriate management (i.e., rotational grazing) to prevent damage to the plant stand. It also has potential as a perennial silage crop and as a source of biomass for bioenergy production. It can be used in many types of conservation plantings, such as buffers and vegetative barriers.

COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION OF NEW RELEASE



'Americus' Indiangrass Production Field

'Americus' indiangrass seed is being produced at the Jimmy Carter PMC for Sharp Brothers Seed Company, the exclusive grower of this new native warm season grass release. Seed should be commercially available in the Southeast in 2005. Indiangrass is a native rhizomatous, perennial warm season grass. It attains heights of 3 to 7 feet. Leaves are flat, narrow (at the base), and often with hairy leaf blades. Leaves range from 10 to 24 inches long. It is relished by livestock and provides high quality forage when green. The seed head is a panicle of 6 to 12 inches in length with golden bronze to yellow seed. Conservation uses include: forage, buffers, wildlife, urban landscapes and critical areas. It is the only indiangrass variety that is native to the Southeast.

PLANT RELEASES PLANNED FOR 2004

NEWBERRY GERmplasm INDIANGRASS



The seed was collected in Newberry County, South Carolina by members of the South Carolina Plant Native Society and employees of the U.S. Forest Service in South Carolina. For the first time we are partnering with the U.S. Forest Service (Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests) in South Carolina and the South Carolina Native Plant Society to release two plants that were collected on the National Forests. These plants are drastically needed to restore eroding sites on the National Forests in South Carolina.

PLANT RELEASES PLANNED FOR 2004

UNION GERMPLASM PURPLETOP



The seed was collected in Union County, South Carolina by members of the South Carolina Native Plant Society and employees of the U.S. Forest Service in South Carolina. For the first time we are partnering with the U.S. Forest Service (Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests) in South Carolina and the South Carolina Native Plant Society to release two plants that were collected on National Forests. These plants are drastically needed to restore eroding sites on the National Forests in South Carolina. An official release ceremony is being planned at the National Forests Headquarters in Columbia, South Carolina.

PLANT RELEASES PLANNED FOR 2004

DURHAM GERMPLASM SWITCHGRASS



Seed was collected in Durham County, North Carolina by Roger Hansard, Plant Materials Specialist, Natural Resources Conservation Service in Raleigh, North Carolina. Durham Germplasm will be primarily used for erosion, wildlife habitat improvement, and native plant restoration in North Carolina.

FARM BILL PROGRAM SUPPORT

Seed sources and supply information for native grasses, cool season legumes for cover crops were electronically transmitted to all NRCS field offices in the Southeast Region.

Plant information sheets were developed for use by NRCS field offices in the Region. The first sheet relates to new native plant releases, the second sheet relates to Jimmy Carter PMC Website Features and the third sheet relates to the involvement of the Plant Materials Program in the implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill.

ASSISTING FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY'S SMALL FARM INITIATIVE

Four small farms in Georgia have been selected for demonstrations of plant materials in a special outreach initiative by the Fort Valley State University. The four small farms are located in the following counties and the resource concerns are also provided.

<u>Farm</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Resource Concerns</u>
Jones Farm	Columbia	Wildlife/Erosion
Kennedy Farm	Tattnall	Wildlife
Arnold Farm	Warren	Native Grasses
Hill Farm	Peach	Native Grasses (forage)

We are working with the district conservationists and soil conservation technicians to get the plant materials establishment and management plans completed and the plant materials/seed allocated for the sites.

PLANT MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY IS NOW ONLINE



Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center is a Leader in plant technology development and transfer of information.

---- One of the first plant materials centers to develop a homepage

---- Current studies address the Farm Bill Programs, Grazing Lands, Water Quality, Native Grasses for the Southeast, Wetland Plant Information, Cover Crops for the Southeast, and Carbon Sequestration.

---- Plant information for Urban Areas includes Wetland Plant Information for:

- constructed wetlands for municipal wastewater treatment
- stormwater management
- malfunctioning septic system

---- Plant Materials technology is provided to Military Bases.

---- Partnerships have been established with local, state, federal agencies, colleges and universities, commercial nurseries. (Example: U.S. Forest Service, Sumter and Francis Marion National Forests Native Plant Initiative).

---- Plant materials assistance is provided to small farmers as an outreach initiative.

---- Publications and literature have been developed on plant releases and the technology for establishment under Southeastern climatic conditions.

---- Conservation plant materials source information is available on the web.

---- PMC website is linked to all states served by the Center.

For more information visit <http://www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/pmc/pmc.html> or <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> or contact the Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center at 229-924-4499, e-mail at mike.owsley@ga.usda.gov or Donald Surrency at 706-595-1339 ext. 3, e-mail at don.surrency@ga.usda.gov.

SOUTHEAST PLANT MATERIALS CONFERENCE

DEVELOPING AND TRANSFERRING PLANT TECHNOLOGY- PUTTING THE 2002 FARM BILL INTO ACTION FOR NRCS, PARTNERS AND CUSTOMERS was the theme. In the summer of 2003 the Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center hosted the first Southeast Plant Materials Conference. Southeastern representatives from plant materials centers, NRCS state office staffs, U.S. Forest Service, U. S. Corps of Engineers, college and universities, business and private landowners attended the conference. The following is a select list of topics covered at the meeting: regional plant material program technology development, highlights of southeastern plant materials centers, outreach initiatives, wildlife habitat improvement, plant materials in grazing lands, plant materials and field office tech guides, plant materials for coastal area stabilization, USFS partnership, plant material and nurseries, plant material and crop improvement associations, native American partnerships, conservation buffers, stormwater control, and use of constructed wetlands. Breakout sessions were held for Agronomists, biologists, grazing lands coordinators, foresters, university personnel, partners and plant material personnel discussed their special interest, needs, concerns and priorities for plant material centers in the SE Region. A tour of the Jimmy Carter PMC was conducted to display some of the work at the Center that supports the **FARM BILL**.



Regional Plant Materials Specialist Discusses Plants for Constructed Wetlands

Grazing management of native warm season grass was demonstrated by using eastern gamagrass, switchgrass, indiangrass, big bluestem and little bluestem. Rotational grazing was emphasized by utilizing portable watering systems and electric fencing. Grazing specialists discussed the use of silvopasture systems to utilize grass, trees, and cattle on the same acreage. The importance of burning to maintain the native grass pastures was covered at the PMC burn study. Plant materials for wildlife habitat improvement was a popular stop on the tour. Alternative crops for small farmers and conservation tillage cover crops were demonstrated and discussed by the plant materials staff. A constructed wetland planting provided the backdrop for an informative talk on plants for water purification.

PLANT MATERIALS STUDIES



Silvopasture Study

Longleaf pine and Pensacola bahia grass during third year of silvopasture study.

Cover Crop/Forage

AU Sunrise Crimson Clover being planted for additional silvopasture study evaluation.



Developing a Native Grass Mix for the Southeast

Mike Owsley, PMC Manager, and Malcome Kirkland, Asst. Mgr., conduct a tour of native mixed grass study at Jimmy Carter Plant Material Center.



Outdoor Classroom for Southwest Georgia Schools

Several years ago a "Classroom without Walls" or an "Outdoor Classroom" was established in Early County for Southwest Georgia schools. The Flint River S&WCD sponsored the classroom, and Tommy Davis of Arlington provided the land. The classroom contains a boardwalk through a pond cypress- black gum savannah wetland, typical of Southwest Georgia. The property also contains transitional upland sites. This diversity in flora and fauna allows the classroom to encompass and teach principles of several environmental science disciplines. Partners from state and federal agencies have provided personnel to instruct the students in botany, ecology, water quality, zoology, soils, forestry, and general environmental science. Participating agencies are NRCS (PMC & Field Offices), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Georgia DNR, Georgia Forestry Commission, and the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission.



Georgia Department of Natural Resources Biologist Shows Students Wetland and Upland Animals

In April 2003, Mike Owsley, the PMC manager, made presentations to the school systems in Early County, Calhoun County, and Deerfield Windsor Academy in Albany, Georgia. He discussed plant identification, plant ecology, plant/animal relationships, and wetland structure. In November 2003, the outdoor classroom was moved to the Parks of Chehaw in Albany, Georgia. Mike made presentations on plants to meet the teachers Quality Core Curriculum requirements in the Miller County School System.



Mike Owsley, Jimmy Carter PMC Manager, Explains Importance of Plants in Wetlands

In April 2004, plant materials presentations were made at the Arlington Outdoor Classroom site for students from Calhoun and Mitchell Counties.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Date Not Finalized	Native Grass Release Ceremony Headquarters, Sumter & Francis Marion National Forests, Columbia, SC
August 19, 2004	Plant Materials Presentation Alabama Treasure Forestland Meeting Wetumpka, Alabama
Date Not Finalized	Congressman Sanford Bishop PMC Tour
Date Not Finalized	PMC Advisory Committee Meeting
Sept. 21, 2004	Wildlife Field Day (Sponsored by Lower Chattahoochee River S&WCD)
Sept. 21-22, 2004	PMC Technical Committee Meeting
Sept. 30, 2004 Tentative	Native Grass Summit Invitee: Researchers from ARS, Colleges and Universities, U.S. Forest Service, DNR from the states served by the PMC
Date Not Finalized	Urban Plant Materials Tour
Date Not Finalized	Small Farmer Tour (Co-sponsored by Ft. Valley State University, College of Agriculture)

PLANT MATERIALS PROGRAM BRIEFS

WILDLIFE FIELD DAY
September 21, 2004 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 Noon
Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center
Americus, Georgia



Sponsored By:
Lower Chattahoochee River Soil & Water Conservation District
Georgia Soil & Water Conservation Commission
Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources Division
Georgia Forestry Commission
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA-Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center
US Fish & Wildlife Service

TOUR OF WILDLIFE STATIONS:

- Mixed Wildlife Feed Plots
- Bobwhite Quail & Turkey Habitat
- Native Grasses for Wildlife
- Forestry BMPS, Prescribed Burning & Silvopasture
- Wildlife Cost Share Programs

Directions to PMC:
Highway 19 north of Americus: Look for conservation field day/Jimmy Carter Plant Material Center signs.



Please return to: Lower Chattahoochee River Soil & Water Conservation District
4344 Albany Highway
Dawson, GA 31742

REGISTRATION FORM

(name – please print or type)

(mailing address)

(city)

(state)

(zip)

(county)

(phone number)

(organization or employer)

Registration Fee is \$10 made payable to the Lower Chattahoochee River S&WCD
Lunch and refreshments will be provided to those who register

For directions to Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center in Americus, Georgia, please call 229-924-4499 or visit www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/pmc/pmc.html.

Need more info about the event?

Please call or email Donald Surrency, 706-595-1339 ext. 3; don.surrency@ga.usda.gov

NATIVE GRASS SUMMIT



**USDA-NRCS JIMMY CARTER PLANT MATERIALS CENTER
AMERICUS, GA**

Sept. 30, 2004, Tentative, Thursday, 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.



WILLOW OAKS FARM



Willow Oaks Farm in Columbia County (Pumpkin Center Community) and owned by H. Jerome Jones is the site of a plant materials outreach project. New plant releases and native grasses are planned for erosion control and improve wildlife habitat. (Quail) (See cover)

About the Author

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Disclosures

Mention of a trademark or propriety product does not constitute a guarantee or warranty of the product by USDA-NRCS.

Website:

<http://www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/PMC/pmc.html> or the Plant Materials Program website at <http://www.Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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