



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Plant Materials Program

Duck Creek Germplasm Texas Dropseed

Sporobolus texanus Vasey

A Conservation Plant Release by USDA NRCS James E. "Bud" Smith Plant Materials Center, Knox City, TX



1USDA-NRCS James E. "Bud" Smith PMC

Duck Creek Germplasm Texas dropseed, *Sporobolus texanus* (Vasey), was released from the James E. "Bud" Smith Plant Materials Center in Knox City, Texas in 2000.

Description

Texas dropseed is a perennial, warm-season, native bunchgrass which is native to the southwestern United States. Plants grow in clumps close to the soil surface. The leaf blades range from 1 ½ to 5 inches long and less than 1 ½ inches wide. The culms of the plant range from 12 to 20 inches long. The seed head is a panicle-type between 4 to 12 inches long and almost the same wide. Once the seed matures, from June to August, the whole seed head breaks away from the plant.

Source

Duck Creek Germplasm Texas dropseed was originally collected from native plants located along an intermittent stream flowing into Duck Creek north of Spur in Dickens County, Texas.

Conservation Uses

Duck Creek Germplasm may be used in pure stands or as a component in seed mixtures for range seeding. It has the potential for use in saline site reclamation, pasture plantings, filter strips, erosion control and critical area plantings. Its forage value is fair to good for livestock and fair for wildlife. Percent crude protein ranges from 4 to 7%. Plants also provide cover and nesting sites for small mammals and birds. Upland birds also feed on the mature seed produced from Texas dropseed.

Area of Adaptation and Use

Duck Creek Germplasm Texas dropseed is adapted to a wide range of soil types, but will perform best on a loam to sandy loam soil. Saline tolerance is similar to but slightly less than that of alkali sacaton, *Sporobolus airoides* (6-12 millimhos).

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

The full seedling rate for Duck Creek Germplasm Texas dropseed is 1.0 pound of pure live seed per acre. When planting this as a component of a seed mixture, the seeding rate should be adjusted to the desired percent of the mix. Seed should be placed ¼ to ½ inch deep.

Seedbed preparation should begin the year prior to spring planting to reduce weed problems during the first year of establishment. Work the site as necessary during the summer or early fall prior to establishment to create a firm weed-free seedbed. Work should be completed in the fall to allow time for the soil to settle and accumulate moisture. Minimum and no-till operations should use herbicide applications to control weeds.

Plantings should be well established before livestock grazing is permitted. Twelve months of grazing deferment should give plants enough time to become established. Established stands of Duck Creek Germplasm Texas dropseed should not be grazed lower than 4-5 inches, depending upon the prescribed grazing system. Contact your local USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service field office for assistance in planning and applying prescribed grazing plans.

Soil tests should be conducted to determine the amount of fertilizer applied to sustain a medium level. Nitrogen should not be used during the establishment year because it will encourage weed growth. Weeds may be controlled by mowing or with herbicides. Consult your local extension weed specialist for recommendations on herbicides for Texas dropseed.

Seed and Plant Production

Texas dropseed is harvested by either direct combining, or with a seed stripper. Average seed yield at Knox City is 135 pounds per acre.

Availability

For conservation use: Commercial seed is available from several commercial seed companies.

For seed or plant increase: Generation zero (G0) seed (equivalent to Breeder seed) will be maintained by the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Center in Knox City, Texas and is available through the Texas Foundation Seed Service in Vernon, Texas, phone number (940) 552-6226.



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Citation

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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/>>



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