



# ETPMC News

ETPMC News is a publication of the USDA NRCS East Texas Plant Materials Center

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## Field Day Scheduled

Mark your calendars, the East Texas Plant Materials Center (ETPMC) will be hosting a field day and luncheon on **Tuesday, May 24, 2011**. Field day events will include field and facility tours, concurrent break out sessions, and the dedication of the new greenhouse /seed lab building. For more information, please contact the ETPMC. We hope to see you there.

## Wheeling Sportsmen

In 2009, Jason Engle and Eddie Taylor of the US Forest Service (USFS) asked the East Texas Plant Materials Center to participate in the Angelina Wheeling Sportsman Event sponsored by the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) and USFS due to the Center's ADA compliant facilities and proximity to the Stephen F. Austin Experimental Forest. Staff at the PMC volunteered time and coordinated efforts to accommodate hunters to help create a successful, fun filled experience. The hunters took several deer, including a 150 class 10 point and 5x5 elk. The hunt was made possible through partnering with NWTF, Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD), USFS, and private land owner, Simon Winston. Participants were allowed to hunt on the SFA Experimental Forest (managed by USFS), Alazan Wildlife Management Area (managed by TPWD), and Winston Tree Farm (managed by Simon Winston). The Lufkin and Tyler evening news covered the hunt, and showcased the elk taken by a young hunter. The event has been a win-win situation providing an excellent experience for the hunters, widespread recognition of work being done by the Plant Materials Program, and a great opportunity to partner with state, federal, and national conservation agencies and organizations. The second annual event won national honors from the NWTF as the Wheeling Sportsman Event of the Year.



## Black eyed Susan Evaluation



The ETPMC and Kika de la Garza PMC in Kingsville, TX are conducting a joint evaluation of black eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia* sp.) collections from Texas and Louisiana. The study objective is to develop a germplasm release adapted to both PMC service areas. Evaluation plantings were established in 2010 at both PMCs and Baytown, Texas. The collections were evaluated for survival, vigor, and seed production. After evaluating the study data from the three sites, ten collections have been chosen for advanced evaluation in 2011.

## Greenhouse Construction



Construction has begun to replace the ETPMC's aging, 50 plus year old greenhouse. A new 3,120 ft<sup>2</sup> structure will house a seed lab, headhouse, and greenhouse. This will provide the ETPMC with a dedicated area for all seed work and lab equipment, increased storage, and a controlled environment for studies and plant propagation. The facility upgrade was made possible through support from Plant Materials Program National Headquarters and the Texas State Office.

## The Garden Patch

### Vertical Gardening

Some of the advantages of vertical gardening include saving garden space, providing air circulation for plants, providing privacy, hiding unattractive views, and keeping produce cleaner and off the ground for easier harvest. The Native Americans used vertical gardening when utilizing a traditional planting of beans, corn, and squash species. The corn was planted first and provided support for the beans. Squash plants provided a ground cover or living mulch around the plants.

Vining types of cucumbers can be grown on a trellis or A-frame. Melons grow well on fences. The fruit needs to be supported in netting, soft cloth slings, or pantyhose. Tie the melon vines to the fence with soft cloth or cotton rope to prevent cutting the vines. Choose indeterminate types of tomatoes for vertical gardening. These types produce vines that easily climb supports and have reduced damage from insects and disease.



## Who We Are

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) collects, selects and releases plants and develops plant technology to address our nation's most critical soil and water problems through the agency's Plant Materials Program. The East Texas Plant Materials Center in Nacogdoches, Texas serves east Texas, western Louisiana, southwest Arkansas, and southeast Oklahoma. The Plant Materials Center is a partnership between the NRCS, US Forest Service, Stephen F. Austin State University, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts in east Texas and western Louisiana.

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