

Management

This species must be reseeded every year for maximum stand density. However, it is a good reseeding annual and a stand may be maintained with proper management for several years. Without proper management, the planted stands will gradually disappear after 1 to 3 years as competing species dominate.

Light disking in late winter encourages natural reseeding establishment. The species also responds to early spring burning. Seed production at the Manhattan Plant Materials Center averaged 320 bulk pounds per acre. These yields were based on stands that were planted annually.

Availability

Generation 1 seed, equivalent to foundation seed, is available from the USDA, NRCS Plant Materials Center in Manhattan, Kansas. Contact your local USDA, NRCS Field Office or the Manhattan Plant Materials Center for a list of commercial vendors that handle the material.

For More Information

Visit our Plant Materials Internet site at <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> to find more information on solving conservation problems using plants.

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Riley Germplasm showy partridge pea



An improved conservation plant developed by the Manhattan Plant Materials Center, Manhattan, KS



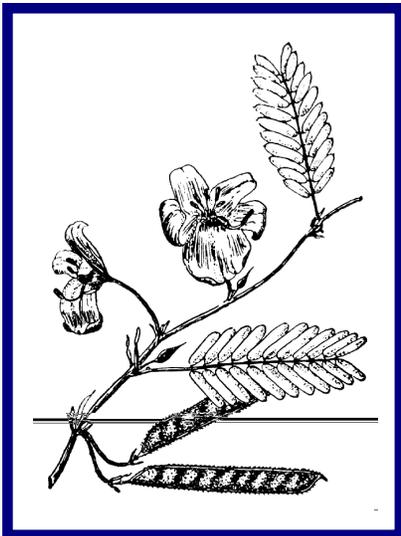
Riley Germplasm showy partridge pea

Riley Germplasm showy partridge pea [*Chamaecrista fasciculata* (Michx.) Greene] was released as source identified class material in 1999 by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Riley Germplasm is recommended for use in wildlife habitat improvement, critical area seeding treatments, and in roadsides, parks, and recreation areas for stabilization and beautification.

Description

Riley Germplasm is an annual, native, warm-season legume. Plants are from 1 to 3 feet tall, and stems are erect and branching. The bright yellow flowers are almost 1 inch wide and occur in clusters of two to seven. The leaves have a distinct gland midway along the stalk and are compound.



Each leaf has 12 to 36 linear leaflet pairs. The fruit is a flat linear pod that bursts open when mature to disperse flat, triangular, dark-brown seeds. There are approximately 57,000 seeds per pound.

The foliage is not readily eaten by livestock. If consumed in large quantities by domestic stock, it may cause stress and infrequently death due to a cathartic substance present in the leaves and seed. Seeds of this plant are considered to be important food for various wildlife species.

Adaptation

This species has a wide geographic area of distribution ranging from Maine to Florida west to southeast South Dakota, southwest to southeast Colorado and south through central Texas. It is found most commonly in rocky or sandy soils in prairies or open woods, along roadsides, and on other disturbed sites. It cannot compete in established prairie grasslands, but frequently colonizes disturbed prairie sites and edges. Riley Germplasm has application for plantings in Oklahoma, Kansas, and the eastern two thirds of Nebraska. The projected area of adaptation for Riley Germplasm is represented on the map. Although the potential range of adaptation may be greater than that shown, performance outside of the shaded area has not been adequately tested.

Origin* and Projected Area of Adaptation

Riley Germplasm showy partridge pea originated from seed collected from native plants growing in Riley County, Kansas (USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 5b).

Annual precipitation for Riley County is approximately 33 inches. The growing season is 179 days with an average daily maximum temperature of 66 F and an average daily minimum temperature of 42 F. The collection site was located on silt loam soils which were formed in alluvial sediments.



Establishment

Riley Germplasm is established from seed. A clean, firm, weed free seedbed is necessary for optimum establishment. Partridge pea will grow on low fertility sites, but will respond to fertilizer. Fertilize according to soil test or in lieu of apply 200 - 300 pounds of 0-20-20 or similar analysis. The recommended seeding rate is 10 pounds pure live seed (PLS) per acre for a pure stand. Usually 2 pounds PLS per acre is recommended for seeding in a mixture. Seeds should be drilled at a depth of 1/4 to 1/2 inch. Seed should be inoculated with EL (cowpea type) inoculant.