

# Marsh Notes

Finding Vegetative  
Solutions for  
Conservation  
Problems



USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center

## Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center New Employee

Newly assigned assistant manager, Curt J. Riche', came on board to the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center in the fall of 2010. Curt's hometown is Cottonport, LA, where his adolescent years revolved around agriculture. His family operates a grain farm. He attended Louisiana State University where he earned a B.S. degree in soil science with emphasis in soil chemistry in 2000 & later earned a M.S. degree in plant physiology in 2004.

Curt has been employed as an extension associate with the LSU AgCenter and has worked with small grain crops including soybeans, corn and grain sorghum. He performed these duties for 4 years and has worked in over 20 parishes across the state of Louisiana. He then joined the team of the USDA/NRCS and accepted a position as a soil scientist and worked the southern portion of the state of Louisiana for over 3 years. Remaining a USDA/NRCS employee he then moved on to becoming a soil conservationist and ultimately a district conservationist in the state of Louisiana. Currently, he serves as assistant manager to the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center.



## Winter Issue 2011

### GREEN FACTS

A single tree can absorb as much carbon in a year as a car produces, driven over 8500 miles. Now plant more trees!!!!  
David J R

### PMC Staff

Garret Thomassie, PMC  
Manager  
garret.thomassie@la.usda.gov

Curt J. Riche'  
Soil Conservationist

Mark Felarise  
Biological Science Technician

Alexis Luke  
Program Clerk

Morris Houck  
Plant Materials Specialist  
Alexandria, LA

## Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center assists Nicholls State University

Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the Golden Meadow Plant Material Center worked in conjunction with Nicholls State University to establish vegetation on Louisiana's rapidly diminishing coastline. Planting was performed on the shorelines of Elmer's Island located in the southeast portion of the state. Vegetative establishment consisted of approximately 3000 'Gulf Coast' Marshhay Cordgrass (*Spartina patens*), 1000 Fourchon Bitter Panicum (*Panicum amarum*) and 600 Timbalier Gulf Bluestem (*Schizachyrium maritimum*). These respective species are all native plants to Louisiana and are effective in coastal restoration. Planting methods included multiple strip plantings at 15 to 18 inch spacing between species. Hand and mechanical methods of planting were used to establish vegetation along side pre-existing sand fences and along the pre-established shoreline sand dunes. Stand counts and plant survival will be monitored in the spring of 2011.



### PMC VEG QUIZ

Can you identify this native species?



Answer in next publication

### The Mission of the NRCS Plant Materials Program:

We develop and transfer plant materials and plant technology for the conservation of natural resources. In working with a broad range of plant species, including grasses, forbs, trees, and shrubs, the program seeks to address priority needs of field offices and land managers in both public and private sectors. Emphasis is focused on using native plants as a sustainable way to solve conservation problems and protect ecosystems.



If you would like more information call us at (985) 475-5280 or visit our web site at <http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/lapmc>

## Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center teams up with CWPPRA

Recently, staff at the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center and personnel including Resource Conservationists and Coastal Vegetative Specialists involved in the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) teamed up to spend the day in the marshes of southeast Louisiana. NRCS engineers, biologists and soil scientists have designed and helped construct rock levees in many areas of the marshes of south Louisiana to assist in marsh creation. High and low tides possess lots of energy and sediment exchange across these rock levees and belief is over time if sufficient sediment could accumulate, then the possibility of establishing vegetation between the rocks could become a reality and could aid in the stability of the rock levees, decreasing long term subsidence. We visited four sites where high energy exchange was evident and set up four test sites to be monitored in the spring of 2011. The four sites established consisted of a variety of vegetation in addition to multiple planting methods. These will serve as initial trials to see if rock levee systems ultimately are capable of supporting native vegetation.



## Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center receives new equipment for 2011

This environmentally friendly pneumatic needle seeder was purchased to expedite the planting process of the minute seed annually planted at the PMC. No oil, gas or electricity, the seeder operates solely on compressed air.



Arrival of the seed germinator couldn't have been better synchronized for the testing of the 2010 harvest of Black Mangrove seed. The germinator is set at approximately 78 degrees Fahrenheit and is very beneficial to the PMC by curtailing the time needed to get these seeds up and growing vigorously. Germinator capacity for Black Mangrove is approximately 2000 seed.

## Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center assists local graduate student

Curt J. Riche', newly assigned Assistant Manager at the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center assisted Yi Wang, graduate student at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA in an attempt to collect *Spartina alterniflora* (Smooth Cordgrass) for graduate research studies. By late November, the *Spartina alterniflora* began to shatter in the south eastern marshes of Louisiana and the seed collection was a success. The fourteen day viability test indicated over 95% of the seeds viable. Assistance to the coastal research studies needed by these graduate students and professors will continuously increase and be provided by the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center.



## Louisiana Native Plant Initiative 2011 Annual Meeting

The Louisiana Native Plant Initiative (LNPI) Annual Meeting will be held on Friday April 29, 2011 at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette - Center for Ecology and Environmental Technology near Carencro. The meeting will begin at 10:00 am with field tours and exhibits showcasing some of the current activities and achievements of LNPI. At noon there will be a hosted lunch followed by a ceremonial signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by over 20 partners that support the objectives of LNPI.

**We're on the Web!**

[www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov)



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