



# Rose Lake Plant Materials Center Fall Newsletter 2010

## Rose Lake PMC Releases Vintage Germplasm Common Elderberry

The Rose Lake Plant Materials Center released Vintage Germplasm common elderberry in August of 2010. A selected class release, this plant was evaluated for growth characteristics, fruit production, and regrowth after cutting. It was selected from 31 populations of common elderberry collected in the Rose Lake PMC service area.

The original vegetative material of this release was collected from Tipton County, Indiana. The collection site was in Major Land Resource Area 111a, Plant Hardiness Zone 5B.

Vintage Germplasm common elderberry is intended for use in streambank and shoreline stabilization. It can be used for enhancement of riparian corridors and provide food and shelter for wildlife. The anticipated area of use of Vintage Germplasm is within the Great Lakes region and upper mid-west United States, which is well within the species' range. Vintage Germplasm inhabits well drained soils near streams and adjacent bottomlands as well as in forests and muck soils.

Vegetative material of this release will be maintained by the USDA-NRCS Rose Lake Plant Materials Center, East Lansing, Michigan, and is available in limited quantities to interested parties for increase purposes.



## Brassicaceous Cover Crops Evaluated at Rose Lake PMC

The Rose Lake PMC, in cooperation with Michigan State University and the University of Minnesota, are conducting a study to measure the growth parameters of mustard, rape, turnip, and oil seed radish.

Brassicaceous species [e.g. *Brassica spp.* (mustard, rape, and turnip) and *Raphanus sativus* (oilseed radish)] are being evaluated for use as cover crops planted after small grain harvest to provide protection from soil erosion. Other benefits of cover crops include reduced fertilizer and pesticide applications, improved yields by enhancing soil health, soil erosion prevention, water quality protection, and soil moisture conservation. Cover crops may be grown during or between primary cropping seasons. They are not grown primarily for harvest; rather, to benefit the environment or other crops. In addition, several species have been shown to reduce soil compaction and nematode populations.

Little plant growth data for *Brassica* and *Raphanus spp.* are currently available. Data from this study will be included in the database for conservation planning tools, such as RUSLE 2 and WEPS, which require plant growth measurements to accurately predict the conservation effects of plants.



Todd Martin, MSU technician planting brassiceous cover crop experiment at Rose Lake PMC



John Durling, PMC Agronomist and Victoria Ackroyd, MSU Extension Educator evaluating plants in the project



Bill Kuenstler, NRCS Conservation Agronomist from Ft. Worth, TX and Jerry Grigar, NRCS State Agronomist collecting data



Brassicaceous Cover Crop growing well at Rose Lake PMC



John Durling collecting data



Sergio Perez, Biological technician at Rose Lake and John Leif, PMC Manager, take initial evaluations of *Raphanus sativus* (oil seed radish)



*Raphanus sativus* (oilseed radish) growing in the field



Another specimen of *Raphanus sativus* (oilseed radish)

## Michigan NRCS Field Offices Highlight PM Program Releases in Demonstration Plantings



In 2006 the Kingsford, MI NRCS Field Office planted Southlow Michigan Germplasm big bluestem, indiangrass, and switchgrass as a demonstration near the Service Center sign post. Four years later the warm season grasses are growing well and demonstrating what those releases look like in that area of the Upper Peninsula. The site has sand and gravel soils with about one inch of topsoil. All three species were five to eight feet tall in that location.



NRCS Field Offices in Michigan, Wisconsin, Indiana, or Ohio have installed demonstration plantings of released materials from the Plant Materials Program. Demonstration plantings give NRCS customers an idea of what the release might look like in their geographic area and provide additional information to customers as they make decisions for conservation plantings. Any field offices wanting to obtain seeds or vegetative material of Plant Materials Program releases please contact Dave Burgdorf, Plant Materials Specialist, at 517-641-7831.

## We knew our tree was special.....

Recently the PMC was visited by Ted Reuschel, from the Michigan Big Tree Project. He was told to come see our beautiful tree and to see where it stood on the biggest tree registry in Michigan. It turns out our beautiful Oak tree is over 150 years old and registers as the fifth largest oak tree in the state of Michigan.

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