

Icy Blue Germplasm Canada Wildrye

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD), and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announce the release of a tested ecotype of Canada Wildrye (*Elymus canadensis* L.) for the Midwest and Great Lakes region. This release will be called Icy Blue Germplasm Canada Wildrye. This collection comes from LaPorte County, Indiana.

Description

Icy Blue is a native perennial bunchgrass that grows to four feet tall with erect or arching culms and flat, wide pointed leaves that grow from the base of the stems to the spike. As a cool season grass, rapid growth occurs early in the growing season, and slows during the mid-summer months. Active growth resumes in the fall and continues through the first frost. Icy Blue has a whitish, waxy bloom, giving it a distinctive 'icy blue' color on the leaf surface and stems. Auricles are claw-like and clasping, arising from a broad, yellowish, or light green collar. The thick and bristly spikelets can reach ten inches in length, and are often two or three to a node. Awns grow to two inches and are usually outwardly twisted.

Environment Impact Assessment

Icy Blue Germplasm Canada wildrye is a selection of naturally occurring germplasm and has been unaltered. Icy Blue Germplasm was determined "OK to release" using environmental evaluation criteria adopted by the NRCS Plant Materials Program.

Conservation Use

Icy Blue is intended for use in prairie restoration, erosion control, and wildlife habitat enhancement. It is a fast germinating perennial bunchgrass that is well suited for stabilizing erodible soil or other disturbed areas. It is often an early succession component of prairie mixtures. This species also provides forage for grazing and browsing wildlife, and the seed provides food for some songbirds.

Adaption

This species range is throughout the continental United State except southeastern states. The anticipated areas of use are the Great Lakes and Midwest regions and are within the species range. Canada wildrye grows well on soils found on sandy shores and dunes, wooded areas, and other disturbed sites throughout much of North America.



Availability

Generation 2 (G2) equivalent to Foundation seed, will be maintained by the USDA-NRCS Rose Lake Plant Materials Center and will be made available in limited quantities to commercial growers for increase purposes. For further information, please contact the Plant Materials Specialist at Rose Lake Plant Materials Center.



For more Information

Please visit our Plant Materials website to learn more about using plants to address conservation problems.

<http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>

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