

Conservation Conversation



John Lloyd-Reilley, plant materials center manager, explains about the work he and his team are doing at the E. "Kika" De La Garza Plant Materials Center in Kingsville, to Louisiana NRCS State Conservationist, Kevin Norton and staff from the Louisiana and Texas Plant Materials Centers, who were visiting earlier this year.

Plant materials center receives National Recognition for Outstanding Team Work

The E. "Kika" De La Garza Plant Materials Center (PMC) in Kingsville recently received the 2007 Plant Materials Outstanding Team Award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This award was presented in recognition of the best overall performance by a Plant Materials Center, Plant Materials Specialist, and associated program during 2007.

The E. "Kika" de la Garza PMC is a 91-acre facility that provides cost-effective vegetative solutions for soil and water conservation problems for the 27-million acres that make up South Texas. They identify plants and develop techniques for successful conservation use of these plants. They also assist in the commercial development of these plants and promote their use in natural resource conservation and other

environmental programs:

The PMC also provides technical assistance to restore Gulf Coast prairie and the associated salt marshes, enhance waterbird habitats, re-vegetate areas disturbed by mining and oil field exploration, and improve range and pasture lands.

"The E. "Kika" De La Garza PMC has become one of the most productive PMC programs in the nation," said Bob Escherman, National Program Leader-Plant Materials. "John Lloyd-Reilley, Shelly Maher, Albert Quiroga, and George Farek have done a commendable job in developing an effective program built on a quality plant selection process and partnerships leading to the advancement of plant science technology for conservation of natural resources in South Texas."

Lloyd-Reilley has cultivated an outstanding working relationship with Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas AgriLife Research Station at Beeville, South Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Gulf Coast Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts. These relationships have produced nine native grass releases in the past two years.

In 2007, the PMC produced 29 scientific documents, 17 popular documents, gave 14 presentations at local, regional and national meetings and provided assistance to more than 400 customers on plant materials related issues. The PMC ranked as the number one producing PMC in 2006 and 2007. In fact, in 2007

than 400 customers on plant materials related issues. The PMC ranked as the number one producing PMC in 2006 and 2007. In fact, in 2007 the PMC scored a perfect 100 percent on the performance index. The PMC staff is committed to producing high quality plant materials products for the South Texas Plains and Gulf Coast.

"It's a nice acknowledgement of the great cooperative effort by my staff and our cooperators, the South Texas Natives Project and Dr. Bill Ocumpaugh at Texas AgriLife Research Station at Beeville," said Lloyd-Reilley.

For the PMC's future efforts, Lloyd-Reilley says they plan to release two forb species, orange zexmenia and clammyweed, in 2008/2009 with their partners at South Texas Natives.

For more information about the E. "Kika" De La Garza PMC, visit their Web site at <http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/STPMC/index.html>.