Native Seed Development for the Piney Woods and Oaks and TEXAS NATIVE SEEDS Prairies Region of Texas







The Need

For many areas of Texas, there are few commercial sources of native seed; for the East Texas region there are almost none. As disturbance and fragmentation increase in Texas, the demand increases for commercially available ecotypic native seed to use in restoration projects. This bottleneck at the commercial native seed supply level puts land managers and project managers in a forced situation to utilize what seed is currently available, which is often seed without any demonstrated adaptability, longevity, or true adaptation to the specific project region. Many restoration seeding failures have occurred in the region using these common seed varieties.



Native plant restoration efforts are in high demand in the East Texas region due to land use changes, increased highway and pipeline construction, energy production, and focused efforts to offset habitat fragmentation due to urbanization and development. These demands for restoration efforts have highlighted the need for an increase in the diversity, quality, and quantity of locally-adapted native seed available from commercial seed suppliers. Lack of locally-adapted native seed at the commercial supply level puts land managers and project managers in a forced situation to utilize the best seed available, which is often seed without any demonstrated adaptability, longevity, or true adaptation to their specific project region. Often times these seeds originate from other ecosystems than the restoration site. Research over the last two decades has strongly and consistently correlated native plant restoration success with the use of locally-adapted, or ecotypic native seed sources. Currently in East Texas, there are few if any such native seed sources available to consumers. We are working to develop ecotypic seed sources of native plant species for the East Texas region that will ultimately be made available for purchase and use in public and private restoration efforts in the piney woods, oak woods and prairies, and blackland prairie ecosystems of East Texas. East Texas Natives is a collaborative initiative to develop and promote regionally adapted native seed sources for use in restoration and reclamation efforts on private and public lands of East Texas. The project is based on a proven model of native seed source development followed by similar initiatives in South, Central, and West Texas over the last 18 years. East Texas Natives is part of the statewide Texas Native Seeds Program operated by the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&M University- Kingsville, and including many private, state, and federal cooperators.









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Abstract

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