

Advanced Evaluation and Seed Increase of Purple Threeawn

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Purple threeawn is a widespread, warm-season, colonizing native grass species. Historically, managers have placed low value on the plant as it is often an indicator of poor range condition, and is of minimal grazing value. However, in response to needs for early successional native grasses for restoration, *Texas Natives Seeds* began collecting and evaluating purple threeawn for several important factors. First it is ideal for reclamation needs along roadsides, in that it is a short statured plant that grows on nearly every soil type. Secondly, on many shallow soil or sandy soil ecological sites, purple threeawn is a dominant plant species, and third, on many rangelands the species is frequently used as a nesting substrate for bobwhite quail in the absence of more palatable perennial grasses..

After 2 years of evaluations at several sites we choose 6 collections originating from south, central, and west Texas for advanced evaluation and seed increase. These 6 were chosen based on origin attributes, survival at multiple sites, growth form, seed production, and active seed germination. Seed increase plots of these 6 selections were installed this spring consisting of 100 plants of each collection grown in isolation. From these 100 plants, we will increase each seed production plot to 1,500 plants next spring in order to produce seed to be used to support a commercial release of the species for reclamation needs.

We hope to release a blend of purple threeawn seed, and/or regional ecotype selections of the species in 2015.

Cooperative funding provided by the Texas Department of Transportation, Lee and Ramona Bass Foundation, Robert J. Kleberg Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation, Ewing Halsell Foundation, Faye L. and William L. Cowden Foundation, Dixon Water Foundation, Caesar Kleberg Partners, Will Harte, and donors to South Texas Natives and Texas Native seeds.