



**A Conservation Plant Released by The Natural Resources Conservation Service
James E. “Bud” Smith Plant Materials Center, Knox City, Texas**

‘PREMIER’ sideoats grama

***Bouteloua curtipendula* (Michx.) Torr.**

‘Premier’ sideoats grama was released in 1960 cooperatively by Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (AES), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)- Agriculture Research Service (ARS) and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Description

Premier sideoats grama is a native, perennial warm season bunchgrass. It provides quick ground cover and early forage. Plant height ranges between 2 to 2½ feet tall. Plant crowns will spread slowly by means of short, stout rhizomes. The straight, mostly basal leaves have a green color. During the vegetative stage, it can be easily recognized by the long, evenly spaced hairs attached to the margins of the leaf near its base. Sideoats grama has a distinct inflorescence consisting of a zigzag stalk with 10 to 30 spikes dangling to the side at even intervals. As seed matures, these spikes will fall to the ground.



Figure 1: ‘Premier’ Sideoats Grama production field. Photo taken by the James E. “Bud” Smith Plant Materials Center, Knox City, Texas.

Source

Premier sideoats grama was collected in 1953 from a single plant growing between Cuauhtemoc and Chichuahua, Mexico.

Conservation Uses

Premier sideoats grama may be used in pure stands or as a component in seed mixtures. It is recommended for range seedings, pasture and hayland plantings, habitat restoration, and critical area plantings. Premier provides quick ground cover and early forage production.

Area of Adaptation and Use

Premier sideoats grama is adapted to sandy loam, clay loam and loam soils in west Texas and southeastern New Mexico. It is adapted to the Western Great Plains Range and Irrigated Region; Central Great Plains Winter Wheat and Range Region; Southwest Plateaus and Plains Range and Cotton Region; Southwestern Prairies Cotton and Forage Region; and South Atlantic and Gulf Slope Cash Crops, Forest, and Livestock Region of Texas. Premier is not recommended for planting on very sandy soils.

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

There are approximately 159,200 seeds of Premier sideoats grama per pound. The full seedling rate for Premier sideoats grama is 3.5-4.5 pounds of pure live seed per acre. When planting Premier as a component of a seed mixture, the seeding rate should be adjusted to the desired percent of the mix. Seed should be placed ¼ to ½ inch deep. Seedling emergence and growth is extremely rapid during the first 30 days with mature plants developing in approximately 120 days.

Seedbed preparation should begin the year prior to spring planting to reduce weed problems during the first year of establishment. Work the site as necessary during the summer or early fall prior to establishment to create a firm weed-free seedbed. Work should be completed in the fall to allow time for the soil to settle and accumulate moisture. Minimum and no-till operations should use herbicide applications to control weeds.

Plantings should be well established before livestock grazing is permitted. Twelve months of grazing deferment should give plants enough time to become established. Established stands of Premier sideoats grama should not be grazed lower than 6 inches, depending upon the prescribed grazing system. Contact your local U.S. Department of Agriculture-NRCS field office for assistance in planning and applying prescribed grazing plans.

Ecological Considerations

No severe insect or disease problems have been observed in Premier sideoats grama once established. Adaptation of this germplasm beyond the area of intended use is unknown.

Seed and Plant Production

Premier compares favorably with other strains of sideoats grama in forage production, yielding 3140 lb/acre under dryland conditions and as much as 6000 lb/acre with irrigation. It is also well suited for seed production. Plants have a tendency to retain spikes after maturity, which allows all seed to reach maturity and stay attached to the plant for harvest. Seed yields under irrigation range from 175 to 200 pure live seed (PLS) lb/acre.

Seed harvest is possible using a variety of methods and implements. Seed ripens indeterminately. A Flail-Vac seed harvester or Shelbourne header is ideal for harvesting ripe seed because they do not damage or eliminate the ability to make subsequent seed harvests. Another method of harvesting mature seed is direct combining.

Availability

For conservation use: Seed is available from licensed native seed dealers in Texas.

For seed or plant increase: Breeder seed is maintained and distributed by Texas AgriLife (formerly Texas Agriculture Experiment Station).

For More Information

USDA-NRCS James E. “Bud” Smith Plant Materials Center

3950 FM 1292 Ste.100

Knox City, Texas 79529

Phone: (940) 658-3922 ext.5

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/plantmaterials/pmc/central/txpmc/>

Citation

Release Brochure for Premier sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula* (Michx.) Torr. 2026. USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, James E. “Bud” Smith Plant Materials Center. Knox City, Texas.

For additional information about this and other plants, please contact your local USDA Service Center, NRCS field office, or Conservation District <<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>>, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov>>



Figure 2: ‘Premier’ Sideoats Grama seed. Photo taken by the James E. “Bud” Smith Plant Materials Center, Knox City, Texas.



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