

CONSERVING THE HERTIAGE OF NATIVE PLANTS

**JERRY U. KAISER, USDA, NATRUAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE, 2803 N. HWY 79,
ELSBERRY MISSOURI 63343**

Abstract: The NRCS Plant Materials Program selects plants for conservation, and develops innovative planting technology to help solve critical resource concerns. A network of 27 Plant Materials Centers and 17 Plant Materials Specialists serves all 50 states and territories. During the past 70 years, the program has cooperatively selected more than 500 plants for conservation applications and for release to the seed industry. The traditional use of native plants, especially those used for rituals and customs, is important to many Native Americans. Native plants were essential in the everyday life of early indigenous people, who used the plants for food, medicine, religion, tools, manufacturing and commercial trade. The NRCS Plant Materials Program complements technical assistance efforts by developing propagation protocols. It also develops brochures and planting guides, and offers PMC tours to transfer technological information about conserving plants. To access these USDA NRCS planting guides on culturally significant plants go to <http://plants.usda.gov>.