

## INTRODUCTION

The intent of this manual is to provide basic information for native seed production of nearly 50 species of the tallgrass prairie flora of the upper Mid-west. The information presented is compiled from published accounts coupled with native seed production experience at the Tallgrass Prairie Center at the University of Northern Iowa. Critical to this effort were publications from the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Program, published research articles and technical notes, and Internet resources. Botanical nomenclature follows USDA PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>).

### What's in the Manual

The manual has four main parts, described briefly as follows:

**General Information** - The first part of the manual consists of four chapters providing general information on greenhouse propagation, harvesting, seed processing, and issues of seed source and quality. Specific examples referencing native species are given to help illustrate the application of the techniques being described.

**Species Reference Sheets** - The next section consists of more in-depth seed production information for 32 selected species. Included are 15 species of wildflowers, 5 species of legumes, 8 species of C4 grasses, and 4 species of C3 grasses. These reference sheets include species' description, habitat preference and conservation status, as well as recommendations for stand establishment, management, and seed harvest and cleaning. In addition, an estimate of the range of seed yield expected is presented in the text, along with actual data derived from records kept for seed increase plots at the Tallgrass Prairie Center. A photograph of the seed is also presented to help illustrate seed size and shape and to highlight issues associated with seed cleaning.

**Appendices** - The third section provides extensive tables summarizing seed production information for nearly **50 native species**. Included are establishment recommendations, seed germination protocols, harvesting and seed cleaning information, sample seed test results, and seed counts per unit weight.

**Supplemental Information** – This last section includes reference material for native plant propagation, native and weed species identification, and research publications on seed germination. Also provided is an abbreviated list of purveyors of seed-related equipment and horticultural supplies.