

## **Evaluation of south Texas Native Plants for Horticultural Use**

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The use of native plants in horticultural settings and landscape plantings is increasingly popular in many urban areas of Texas. Increased awareness of native plants' ecological value, drought tolerance, benefit to wildlife and butterflies and overall aesthetic value make native plants desirable to many landscape architects and consumers. In 2006-2007 we sent representative plants of 10 attractive native plants species to 5 horticulturists throughout Texas for evaluation in horticultural plantings.

- Selections of sideoats grama, yellow Indiangrass and Arizona cottontop received the highest ratings for landscaping use of all species planted in these evaluations.
- Poor plant survival and intermittent flowering was noted in most of the forb species evaluated.
- Larger grasses such as big bluestem, seacoast bluestem and two-flowered trichloris suffered from a high degree of lodging and relatively slow growth rates.
- In the opinion of the outside evaluators, none of the evaluated material warrants separate release of horticultural varieties, however as releases are made and seed is available, we will encourage the use of native species in these types of plantings.

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