

Port Clarence Germplasm largeflower speargrass

Poa eminens
Selected Class Release "Natural"

Usest Revegetation in Coastal Regions Alaska

Background Information

Largeflower speargrass is found along seashores in sandy places. Accordingly, another common name for this plant is salt bluegrass.

Largeflower speargrass is perennial, growing to a height of 1 meter (Hultén, 1968). Its leaves are broad, up to 10 mm. It has sharp-edged leaves and spear-like tips. As its common name implies, its flowers are large (9-24 cm long). With all these characteristics, *Poa eminens* can be identified in the wild.

It has thick rhizomes (horizontal underground roots), which provide winterhardiness and the ability to



survive in windy, rainy conditions. If the soil around this grass is disturbed, the rhizomes spread vigorously.

Map from Hultén, 1968. Used with the permission of Stanford University Press.

Distribution

Poa eminens can be found in all coastal regions of Alaska but the North Slope (Hultén, 1968). It is found in similar ecosystems in eastern Russia, Canada, China, and Asia. It is considered sub-arctic (Clayton et al., 2002).

Port Clarence Germplasm largeflower speargrass seed is maintained by the Alaska Plant Materials Center for commercial production.

Alaska Plant Materials Center

Serving Alaska's needs in production of Alaska native plants

Port Clarence Germplasm

Port Clarence Germplasm largeflower speargrass was collected at Port Clarence, Alaska, in 1995 (Wright, 2006).

This native grass is a
Selected Class Release by
the Alaska Plant Materials
Center (PMC). This means
it has been grown and
harvested at the PMC and
continues to preserve its
excellent performance.

This grass is recommended for use in revegetation because its seedlings are vigorous and provide good initial plant cover.

Interesting Note:

The population of Port Clarence, near Nome, Alaska, averages about 12 residents, but is in constant fluctuation. It is the site of a Coast Guard Station designated as a Long Range Aids to Navigation (LORAN). Men and women stationed there are often transferred from one station to another.

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Port Clarence Germplasm largeflower speargrass

Port Clarence Germplasm largeflower speargrass for Alaska Revegetation Purposes

Port Clarence is ideal for revegetation seed mixes in sub-arctic coastal habitats. Its seedlings are vigorous and can grow in many conditions where other grasses and forbs cannot survive.

Port Clarence is suited for sandy, slightly saline, coastal revegetation. It provides habitat for many shorebirds.



Poa eminens seed ~668,833 seeds per pound



Klebesadel (1994) did some experiments with *Poa eminens* and many other grasses at the Experimental Station in Palmer, Alaska.

He used the same treatments on all of the grasses. He found that if a high-nitrogen fertilizer was used, *Poa eminens* tended to lodge worse than any of the other grasses compared. At mid-season, though, this grass had the highest moisture content than the other grasses, making it very good for forage.

From this research, Klebasadel suggested the use of *Poa eminens* for forage and soil stabilization in saline conditions and coastal areas.

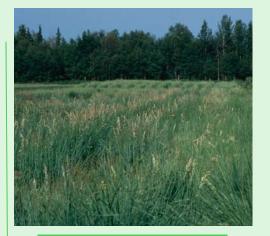
To Produce Port Clarence

Conventional farm equipment is needed. A drill for seeding at a depth of ~1/2 inch is recommended. Port Clarence grows well on a mediumwet, loamy soil.

Seedling vigor is fast and good. It grows best with irrigation, cultivation of weeds, and very little fertilization (Wright, 2005).

Seed can be harvested easily with normal equipment.

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Port Clarence in production at the Alaska Plant Materials Center, Palmer.

Poa eminens characteristics

Wetness Tolerance moderate **Acidity Tolerance** moderate **Seedling Vigor** good **Yield Potential** fair Longevity good **Drought Resistance** medium **Winter Hardiness** good **Palatability** good

References

Clayton, W.D., Harman, K.T. and Williamson, H. (2002 onwards). *World Grass Species: Descriptions, Identification, and Information Retrieval*. Http://www.kew.org/data/grasses-db.html. [accessed 19 October 2006; 09:24 AST).

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