

§ 613.3 NRCS responsibilities in plant materials.

NRCS operates or enters into agreements with state universities or other state organizations to operate plant materials centers. NRCS employs specialists for selecting and using plant materials. NRCS responsibilities are to:

(a) Identify the need for suitable plant materials and cultural and management methods in resource conservation and for environmental protection and enhancement.

(b) Assemble and comparatively evaluate plant materials at the plant materials centers and on sites where soil, climate, or other conditions differ significantly from those at the centers.

(c) Make comparative field plantings for final testing of promising plants and techniques in cooperation with conservation districts and other interested cooperators.

(d) Release cooperatively improved conservation plants and maintain the breeder or foundation stocks in ways appropriate for particular state and plant species by working with experiment stations, crop improvement associations, and other state and federal agencies.

(e) Produce limited amounts of foundation or foundation-quality seed and plants available by grant to or by exchange with conservation districts, experiment stations, other federal and state research agencies, and state seed certifying organizations that will use the material to establish seed fields, seed orchards or plantings for vegetative increase.

(f) Encourage conservation districts, commercial seed producers, and commercial and state nurseries to produce needed plant materials for conservation uses and to assist them in this production.

(g) Encourage the use of improved plant materials in resource conservation and environmental improvement programs.

§ 613.4 Special production of plant materials.

NRCS can produce plant materials in the quantity required to do a specific conservation job if this production will serve the public welfare and only if the

plant materials are not available commercially. This function will be performed only until the plant materials are available commercially. Specific production of plant materials by NRCS requires the approval of the Chief.

§ 613.5 Plant materials centers.

(a) The National Plant Materials Center. The National Plant Materials Center at Beltsville, Maryland, serves as the central facility for assembling, increasing, and determining the characteristics of plant materials from foreign and domestic sources. Plant materials with potential value for conservation and related uses are distributed to other plant materials centers.

(b) Other Plant Materials Centers. There are 23 other plant materials centers. Each serves several major land resource areas. Seventeen of these other centers are operated by NRCS, and six by cooperating agencies, as follows:

(1) Operated by NRCS:

Tucson, Arizona
 Lockeford, California
 Brooksville, Florida
 Americus, Georgia
 Molokai, Hawaii
 Aberdeen, Idaho
 Manhattan, Kansas
 Quicksand, Kentucky
 East Lansing, Michigan
 Coffeerville, Mississippi
 Elsberry, Missouri
 Bridger, Montana
 Cape May Courthouse, New Jersey
 Big Flats, New York
 Corvallis, Oregon
 Knox City, Texas
 Pullman, Washington

(2) Operated by cooperating agencies with financial and technical assistance from NRCS:

Los Lunas, New Mexico (New Mexico State University)
 Bismarck, North Dakota (North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts)
 Meeker, Colorado (White River and Douglas Creek Soil Conservation Districts with partial funding from NRCS)

(3) Operated by cooperating agencies with technical assistance from NRCS:

Palmer, Alaska (State of Alaska)
 Kingsville, Texas (Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas Agricultural and Industrial University, and South Texas Association of Conservation Districts)