



October 28, 2014

**NEW MEXICO FIELD OFFICE TECHNICAL GUIDE
TRANSMITTAL NOTICE NO. NM-73**

SUBJECT: ECS – ‘Windbreaker’ Big Sacaton (*Sporobolus wrightii*) for Use in Herbaceous Barriers and as Vegetative Mulch

Purpose: To distribute information about the usefulness of ‘Windbreaker’ big sacaton for possible use in herbaceous barriers and as vegetative mulch in the southwestern United States. Since 1980, the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center (LLPMC) in Los Lunas, NM has been evaluating big sacaton, which is a native, warm-season, grass species. These evaluations led to the plant material release in 2010 of ‘Windbreaker’ big sacaton (*Sporobolus wrightii*). ‘Windbreaker’ has the potential to be a major component in several herbaceous conservation practices on land uses such as cropland, urban landscapes, and critical land areas and homestead sites. ‘Windbreaker’ big sacaton can help protect these landscapes against damaging erosive forces in the windy season and during extreme rain events, especially in the southwestern U.S.

Effective Date: This notice is effective when received.

Filing Instructions: These documents are accessible through New Mexico NRCS electronic Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG), Section I – Technical Notes – Plant Materials.
<http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/treemenuFS.aspx>

Explanation: This technical note was prepared by the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center. It presents information about the evaluations conducted by the LLPMC of big sacaton as a vegetative erosion control product. These evaluations indicate that the plant material release of ‘Windbreaker’ big sacaton should be considered when prescribing conservation practices such as windbreak plantings, herbaceous wind barriers, wildlife plantings, vegetative mulching, and noise or visual barrier screens. This technical note provides recommendations on the use and planting of ‘Windbreaker’ big sacaton to protect our natural resources in areas where it is well-adapted.

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