



Distribution of Switchgrass in Mexico

Juan M. Martinez Reyna; Universidad Autonoma Agraria Antonio Narro; Contact Author Email: jmarrey@uaaan.mx

Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) is a North American native, C4, perennial grass. It grows south of latitude 55°N. from Saskatchewan to Nova Scotia in Canada, and south throughout most of the United States east of the Rocky Mountains. It is most abundant in the Great Plains and eastern states. This cross-pollinated grass has been used for warm-season pasture and to reseed rangelands. The U.S. Department of Energy has identified this species as a promising biomass fuel crop. Morphologically switchgrass is classified into lowland and upland ecotypes. The lowland type has coarse and erect stems, glabrous leaves, and rust (*Puccinia graminis Pers.:Pers.*) resistance, and grows as a 0.6- to 3.0-m-tall semi-bunchgrass. The upland type has fine and semi-decumbent stems, pubescence in the upper surface of the leaf blade, short rhizomes which produce a sod, and less robust growth with a height of 0.9 to 1.5 m. The objective of this study was to determine the distribution of this species in Mexico. Data from the National Herbarium of UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico), from the herbarium of Antonio Narro University (UAAAN) and from sites of germoplasm collection were used in this study. In Mexico switchgrass grows to a latitude from 16°06' N (La Trinitaria, Chiapas) to 29°04' N (Jimenez, Coahuila) and to a longitude from 86°50' W (Punta Molas, Cozumel, Q. Roo) to 113°06' W (Baja California Sur). This region includes: Veracruz (Gulf of Mexico Coast); Quintana Roo (Yucatan Peninsula); Baja California Sur, Nayarit, Jalisco and Chiapas (Pacific Coast); Chihuahua, Coahuila and Nuevo Leon (Northern Mexico), and San Luis Potosi and Puebla (Central Mexico). In tropical and subtropical areas the lowland type is the most common and in temperate areas the upland type is more abundant. The types of vegetation where this species occurs are: Pine-Oak Forest, Lowtopical Deciduous Forest, Tropical Evergreen Forest and Shrubland mainly as part of the riparian vegetation.

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