UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
PLANT SCIENCES DIVISION
Washington, D. C.

and

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
Bismarck, N. D.

NOTICE OF RELEASE OF "MIDWEST" MANCHURIAN CRABAPPLE FOR CONSERVATION PLANTINGS

The Plant Sciences Division of the Soil Conservation Service and the Bismarck, North Dakota, Plant Materials Center of the Soil Conservation Service announce the release of a superior, small-fruited crabapple, Malus baccata (L.) Borkh. var. mandshurica (Maxim.) Schneid, to be named "Midwest".

This introduction originated from seed collected from Echo, Manchuria, by A. F. Woeikoff in the early 1920's. The Bismarck Plant Materials Center has evaluated "Midwest" since 1954, receiving the original seedlings from the Canada Department of Agriculture Research Station at Morden, Manitoba.

At the Bismarck Plant Materials Center it has been a medium tree, reaching a height of 20 feet in 16 years. It is one of the earliest species to leaf out in the spring and is fully leafed before blooming. The blossoms are white. "Midwest" crabapple has produced a good crop of fruit at Bismarck every year since 1959. Fruit size varies from one-fourth to one-half inch in diameter. The fruit remains on the tree throughout the winter unless eaten by wildlife. The young trees grew about two feet each year in the early years, then growth slowed down. A height of 15 feet was reached by 1966 (the 12th year) and a height of 21 feet in 1972 (the 18th growing season). Crown width in 1972 was also 21 feet.

Some birds and upland game bird species use the fruit readily. "Midwest" appears to be almost completely disease-free. Occasionally fire blight will affect a few leaves, but the infection has never been severe.

"Midwest" has an excellent growth form. When planted in single-row windbreaks, or given sufficient growing room, it maintains branches close to the ground. It is an excellent tree for wildlife plantings, for single-row field windbreaks where a medium-height tree is desired and width is not a factor, for farmstead windbreaks in the position of a medium-height tree, and for recreational, beautification, and screening plantings.

"Midwest" is easy to grow from seed and produces vigorous seedlings. It is easy to establish in field plantings. It is relished by deer and rabbits. If animal populations are high, the trees should be protected, or the deer and rabbits controlled, until the trees are well established. Survival has

averaged 90 percent since 1960 for plantings in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. It was tested in over 50 plantings under the accession number ND-282. It does well on all arable, moderately deep to deep, moderately to well drained soils not affected by salinity, alkalinity or claypan conditions.

Reports from other plant materials specialists indicate "Midwest" has a wide range or adaptability from Wisconsin to Montana, and south to Kansas and Indiana, as shown by the following performance notes.

Location	Year Planted	Survival	Height	Crown Spread	Diseases	Insect Damage
Rose Lake, MI	1968	92%	6'	6'	None	None
Manhattan, KS	1968	100%	7-9'	7-9'	None	None
Bridger, MT	1960	100%	12'	12'	None	None
Townsend, MT	1961	Excellent	--	--	None	None

"Midwest" is being evaluated in about 40 field plantings in Indiana,Michigan, and Wisconsin. The first plantings were made in 1969. Survival and growth rate have been good throughout the area on well-drained soils. Plants are surviving and making limited growth on droughty sites.

Propagation by commercial nurseries will be from open pollinated seed. Seed and plants to establish seed orchards of "Midwest" will be available to commercial growers in limited quantities from the Soil Conservation Service Plant Materials Center, Bismarck, North Dakota.

Approved by Charles A. Evans
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State Conservationist, North Dakota

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Director, Plant Sciences Division
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Washington, D.C.

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