UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION, ECOLOGICAL SCIENCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

NOTICE OF RELEASE OF 'SANDY' RUGOSA ROSE

The United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service announces the naming and release of 'Sandy' rugosa rose (Rosa rugosa Thumb.)

'Sandy' rugosa rose (Rosa rugosa Thumb.) originates from a cross of 12 superior strains that were selected from an assembly of 48 total seed accessions. These 12 strains were selected for their superior seedling vigor, survival, growth rate, foliage abundance, high level of insect and disease resistance, and good fruit production. Sandy has been field tested at sand dune locations from North Carolina to Massachusetts with good success. While the species Rosa rugosa is commonly found growing within USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 4b-8b, the cultivar Sandy is presently being recommended for use within zones 5b-8b.

The states of origin of these 12 superior strains that composes the make up of Sandy rugosa are Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, and New Jersey.

Description

'Sandy' rugosa rose is very adaptive with good tolerance to salt spray and droughty soil conditions. Since its growth is best on well drained, sandy soils, it performs extremely well as a shrubby stabilization plant on coastal sand dunes. Under these conditions, Sandy can attain heights of 1.2 m to 1.5 m.

Although deciduous, this erect shrub can offer year round sand dune protection due to its dense stem production character. The numerous stems produced by Sandy are covered with fine, sharp thorns. It has serrated, lustrous, dark green leaves which have a somewhat hairy underside. The leaves are also compound with five to nine thick leaflets.

Sandy rugosa rose has solitary white to purple flowers that are 5 cm to 7.6 cm in diameter. These colorful flowers are only produced by plants which are two years old and greater. The flowers give rise to bright orange to red fruit when ripe in mid to late summer. The fruit range from 1.9 cm to 3.2 cm in diameter. Within the leathery outer membrane of the fruit are

many small, about 2.5 mm, swollen ovate seeds. In addition to reproducing by seed, Sandy rugosa rose slowly spreads by stout underground root suckers, forming dense thickets vegetatively.

The dense salt tolerant thickets, which form in only a few years, make this plant ideal for back dune stabilization. If such dense colonies develop when inter-planted with other dune shrubs, good protection can be ensured to adjacent coastal communities.

Conservation Use

While the positive physical erosion control characteristics of Sandy rugosa rose are its primary importance, it also has aesthetic attributes which may be desirable to some residential coastal communities.

When considered for planting around residential areas, Sandy has numerous applications. The aesthetic value of this shrub are obvious: dark green summer foliage and flowers which bloom most of the summer. By planting Sandy around residential areas, wildlife will be attracted providing a living bird feeder or birdhouse, as well as escape cover for both birds and mammals. If this same planting was established with close spacings, this shrub could be utilized as a living fence or included in a privacy screen.

Establishment

For nursery production, fall seeding of rugosa rose into raised beds is recommended. If fall seeding is not feasible, spring establishment can be done using seed which has gone through a 90 day cold/wet stratification period, then planted into raised beds. Without stratification, germination is usually poor.

Because of Sandy's vigorous juvenile growth rate, the root system and stem produced by one year old seedlings may be more desirable for transplanting than that of two-year-old seedlings. Fertilization is recommended to improve survival and accelerate growth once the seedlings have been planted.

Foundation seed and plants will be produced by the Soil Conservation Service at the Cape May Plant Materials Center, 1536 Route 9 North, Cape May Court House, New Jersey 08210. Foundation seed will be available to commercial nurseries in January 1993.

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2/23/94
Date

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State Conservationist
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1/21/93
Date