

Researcher identifies perennials tolerant to salt

WOOSTER, OH — For the first time, a researcher has come up with a list of perennial species that are more salt tolerant than others. Now, landscape professionals looking to beautify sidewalks, driveways and roadways subjected to heavy de-icing during winter don't have to guess as to which

perennials will work best.

Laura Deeter, an Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute researcher, analyzed 38 perennial species and compiled a list of 15 plants that performed the best under various levels of soil applied sodium chloride.

Species found to be very tolerant to salt were:

- Splendens sea thrift
- Karl Foerster feather reed grass
- Helen Allwood pinks
- Blue lyme grass
- Perennial fountain grass

Other species found to be tolerant included Powis Castle wormwood, Silver Mound artemisia, Elijah Blue fescue, variegated hosta, sea lavender, Cherry Cheeks and Stella d'Oro daylilies, Autumn Joy sedum, creeping lilyturf and Palace Purple alumroot.

Deeter discovered that it was each plant's ability to regulate where the sodium went within the cell that determined how salt tolerant they were.

The five-year project started in a greenhouse before ending in a hand-salted field. "I wanted to see if the results of the greenhouse study accurately predicted salt tolerance during dormancy, and they did for those plants studied," Deeter says.

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—Steve Naito, AOI
Business Viewpoint (January/February 1999),
publication of the Associated Oregon
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