

Information for Sourcing Native Plants

Purpose: Some of our grantees had a difficult time sourcing plants. We've assembled this list and some tips to help you optimize your grant funds as well as to ensure the appropriate selection of your native plants for aesthetics and longevity of your garden.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: The grant does not cover cultivars or "nativars"--only original species. ***Read the label!***

Original or straight species of Butterflyweed = *Asclepias tuberosa*. The label should show both the common and *scientific name*.

Cultivar: *Asclepias tuberosa* "hello yellow"

Tips:

1. It is possible you might need to locate from different sources. One source might not have all the plants on your list; another one might have the ones on your list but not available at source #1.
2. Please plan ahead. Trying to get plants a day or two ahead of your planting day may mean you won't get the plants you want, might not get plants that are ideal for your conditions, etc.
3. Please try to stick to your list you submitted or the list that gets created with you and your mentor if you receive one. We had grantees being encouraged to purchase plants that were available at the garden center by garden center employees but were not appropriate for the conditions.
4. Some garden centers may be able to place a special order for you, especially if it is a significant purchase.
5. Ordering online is an option but note that ones like Prairie Moon Nursery and Prairie Nursery have restricted dates due to heat or cold impacting plants. You will also have the added cost of shipping.
6. An option you might consider is **creating an account with a wholesaler**. There are some extra steps involved, and you might need to purchase in bulk, but your cost will be lower AND you will likely be guaranteed to get the exact plants you need. You will also need to travel to go and pick up the plants. Most of the growers are at least an hour away. Wholesalers are [Midwest Groundcovers](#); [Natural Garden Natives \(NGN\)](#) is the line that specializes in local eco-type native plants, and the one we recommend you stick to. Midwest sells a lot of cultivars and non-native plants, which the grant will not cover. **Other recommended local wholesalers are** [Possibility Place](#), [Natural Communities](#), [Native Plants](#), [Pizzo Nursery](#), and [Red Buffalo Nursery](#).

Recommended sources for native plants:

[Natives Haven](#) (Harvard, IL)

[Natural Communities, Native Plants](#) (Batavia, IL) they have free shipping for orders over \$59.99 and always free local pick up; a variety of sizes available too. They sell only native plants. They will also come to your green event and sell plants on site. Past grantees have found them very easy to work with.

[Possibility Place](#) (Monee, IL) specializes in woody plants but has a good selection native plants and grasses; they provide plants for many non-profit plant sales. For retail, please call ahead and make an appointment to drop by their operations since they are mostly a wholesale grower.

[Natural Garden Natives](#) is a branded line from Midwest Groundcovers. Midwest (St. Charles, IL) is a major wholesaler to retailers. If the retailer doesn't have the plant you are looking for, you can special order them for you! The turnaround can be fairly short too. [Where to buy Natural Garden Natives.](#)

[Pizzo Nursery](#) (Leland, IL) Plants grown on a 40-acre farm; plants are bought in flats. They do on-line sales and are a wholesaler provider to many non-profit plant sales.

Traditional Garden Centers (Retail Stores)

These places are fine for small quantities of plants, but they may not have everything on your list. They likely also sell cultivars. They are not ideal if you have a large number of specific plants you'd want, particularly ones that they don't typically carry. You also need to be careful about how knowledgeable staff is about native plants.

[Christy Webber Farm and Garden](#) (Chicago) seems to depart from most typical garden centers. They state they will ensure that grantees will receive appropriate plants for their spaces because staff is being trained about the native plants in more depth than is the standard for garden centers. Grantees can contact Cooper Forsman in advance, and he can give you a short consultation to help with selection and a 10% discount on native plants there. The approximate 200 species are originally sourced from *Possibility Place* and *Natural Garden Natives* (local-ecotype and neonic-free) and are available throughout the growing season. Christy Webber is dedicated to ensuring that purchasing local-ecotype material in the city is as convenient as possible.

[Seguin Gardens and Gifts](#) (Cicero, IL) is a social enterprise of UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago. They are beginning to expand their selection of native plants. Their mission is to create jobs and vocational training for individuals with developmental disabilities.

[Empowering Gardens](#) (Forest Park, IL) carries a small selection of native plants. Be careful as we've had reports of buyers being told a plant was a straight species when in fact it was a cultivar. We will not reimburse for cultivars. As a retail operation their prices are expensive and a poor use of grant funds.

[Good Earth](#) (River Forest, IL) might be able to special order from Midwest Groundcovers's Natural Garden Natives (NGN) line. Be careful, though, because they may only have cultivars available. We will not reimburse for cultivars. As a retail operation their prices are expensive and a poor use of grant funds.

[The Growing Place](#) (Aurora, Naperville)

[Lurvey Garden Center](#) (Multiple locations) have events weekly and have a large selection of natives.

[Wasco Nursery and Garden Center](#) (St Charles, IL)

Online Sources

[Prairie Moon Nursery](#): a wonderful online source of plants and knowledge

[Praire Nursery](#): another dependable online source with lots of beautiful plants

[Natural Communities, Native Plants](#): description above; they also do online sales.