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‘Prairie Petite’ Lilac

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‘Prairie Petite’ Lilac

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The seeds were germinated and evaluated for dwarfing tendencies. R-2 generation, open-pollinated, seedling plants, derived from the smallest R-1 plants of the 1962 studies, were grown and evaluated for dwarfing characteristics. Several R-2 plants were selected for further testing, and we are releasing the one (NP103) with the name ‘Prairie Petite’.

Description

At the Univ. of Nebraska West Central Research and Extension Center, the original plant of NP103 is 94 cm tall × 114 cm wide after 23 years, and several 6-year-old plants average 38 cm tall and 70 cm wide. This selection was vegetatively propagated and evaluated for 5 years at four other locations (Table 1); it tended to be more vigorous at locations other than North Platte but still was considered a compact dwarf.

Leaf blades on the original parent plant in North Platte average 4.9 cm wide × 6.9 cm long, while leaves on the 6-year-old plants in North Platte averaged 4.5 cm wide × 6.2 cm long. The initial color of newly opened florets is light pink, which fades to light lavender as the florets mature [red-purple group 73D and red-purple group 69D, respectively, of the Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, (Royal Horticultural Society, 1966)]. Florets average 0.9 cm wide, and inflorescences average 5 cm long × 5 cm wide.

‘Prairie Petite’ is vegetatively propagated by divisions, stem cuttings, or micropropagation (tissue culture) techniques. Division is usually performed in early spring, and cuttings are taken during the spring and summer season.

This selection also has potential as parental material in lilac breeding programs. Progeny grown from open-pollinated seed collected from ‘Prairie Petite’ have been variable in plant size in field trials at North Platte.

Availability

Plant material of ‘Prairie Petite’ will be offered for sale through Briggs Nurseries, 4407 Henderson Blvd., Olympia, WA 98501. This selection is not patented.

Scientists interested in plants for research purposes should contact D.T.L., Univ. of Nebraska West Central Research and Extension Center, Rt. 4, Box 46A, North Platte, NE 69101.

Literature Cited


Table 1. Performance reports of ‘Prairie Petite’ lilac at four locations after five growing seasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Ht (cm)</th>
<th>Width (cm)</th>
<th>Comments from evaluators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Barrington, Ill.</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dark-green foliage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnston, Iowa</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>More tolerant to powdery mildew than other Syringa vulgaris selections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parkhill, Okla.</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Compact and good foliage, seems to bloom at a younger age than other S. vulgaris selections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympia, Wash.</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Professor.
²Deceased.