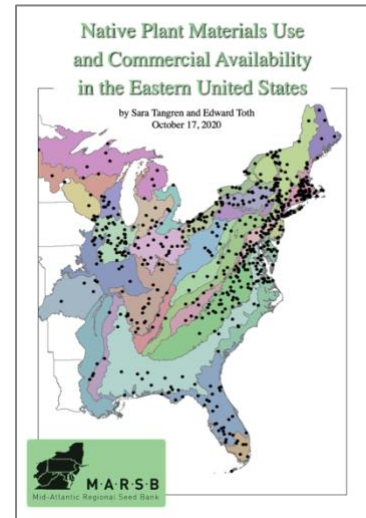


Preference for local ecotypes driving growing demand for native plants, survey finds

In 2018, the Mid Atlantic Regional Seed Bank (MARSB) conducted the first survey of users of native plant material (NPM) in the Eastern United States in order to better understand the challenges native plant users face and to collect their insights on potential solutions. In October, MARSB released the results.

From the 760 responses, from all states east of the Mississippi River, some clear patterns surfaced:

- a preference for local ecotypes (74%)
- almost no interest in cultivars (0.3%)
- commercial availability as the greatest barrier to use of local ecotypes
- ninety-two percent use native seeds
- those who prefer local ecotypes are forced to buy from suppliers who are more distant than their concept of “local” would support
- expectation that demand for native plants will increase each year



Respondents offered potential solutions such as creating an online marketplace and charging premiums for local ecotypes. The report's authors also view the development of a network of active seed banks as essential in building a reliable source to meet Eastern native plant material needs.

In our February issue of *The Buzz*, look for [Seed Huntress](#) Sefra Alexandra's article on MARSB's work, including insights from the report's authors Edward Toth and Sara Tangren about how we can move forward as a community of practice.

In the meantime, to read the full report click [here](#).