



United States Department of Agriculture

Soil Conservation Service

Davis, California



'Casa' Quailbush



'Casa' Quailbush (*Atriplex lentiformis*)

The USDA Soil Conservation Service, the California Agricultural Experiment Station, and the California Department of Fish and Game cooperated in the release of 'Casa' quailbush. 'Casa' was developed at the SCS Plant Materials Center, Lockeford, California. This species occurs from the upper San Joaquin and Salinas Valleys, south to lower California. It extends eastward into Nevada, Utah, and New Mexico.

Description

A native, erect, spreading, evergreen shrub, about 2.7 to 4m (9 to 12 feet) high and 3 to 3.7m (10 to 12 feet) wide. Leaves alternate, grey-green, scurfy, triangular to oblong, truncate to wedge-shaped at base, 1.26 to 5cm (1/2 to 2 inches) long, 1 to 2.5cm (1/2 to 2 inches) wide, single-veined from the base. This strain has shown equal to superior performance to all other species tested to date in establishment, vigor, growth rate, upland game use and erosion control.

Adaptation

'Casa' can be grown on slightly acid to strongly alkaline soils (pH 6 to 8.5) and survive on annual precipitation of 20 to 25cm (8 to 10 inches) when irrigated for initial establishment. It has performed well at elevations up to 610m (2,000 feet) and with annual precipitation ranging from 30 to 100cm (12 to 40 inches).

Uses

'Casa' quailbush has exhibited excellent performance as a conservation plant on various critical areas, for upland game cover and for environmental enhancement on deep, medium, or fine-textured soils that are well to poorly drained.

Establishment

This quailbush strain is an excellent seed producer; the flowering period is June through August, with maturing from October through December. Mature seed tends to shatter, so periodic hand harvesting provides optimum production. There are about 1,087,000 seeds per kilogram (500,000 per pound). Seed germination is from 60 to 85 percent. Plants are propagated by direct seeding into containers in the greenhouse and by direct field planting. Seeding rate is 6 lbs. per acre drilled, and 9 lbs. per acre broadcast. Seed should be planted on weed-free seed bed in January- February.

Seed Availability

The Lockeford Plant Materials Center is responsible for maintaining a supply of breeder seed. Plants are available from several commercial nurseries.

The Plant Materials Center located in Lockeford, California is one of the 23 centers the Soil Conservation Service operates. Special emphasis is placed on finding suitable plants for erosion control on soils and sites where it is difficult to establish protective vegetative cover.

Plant materials are a significant component of about two-thirds of the conservation practices that farmers, ranchers and others find essential to the solution of erosion and sedimentation problems. It is SCS policy to assemble, evaluate, release and distribute for commercial increase, new or improved plant materials needed for resource conservation and development.

SCS assistance is available without regard to race, creed, color, sex, or national origin.