

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE, ABERDEEN, IDAHO.  
and  
THE IDAHO AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
ABERDEEN, IDAHO

**NOTICE OF RELEASE OF A SELECTION OF LAUREL WILLOW,  
SELECTED CLASS OF NATURAL GERMPLASM**

The USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station announce the release of a selected class of **Laurel Willow** (*Salix pentandra*).

As a "Selected" release, this plant will not be given a name but will be referred to as the **Aberdeen Selection of Laurel Willow**. Its name will not include a reference to its original collection location as it is an introduced species which has become naturalized to the upper Midwest and Eastern Regions of the United States. The Aberdeen Selection of Laurel Willow is released as a Selected Class of certified plant material (natural track). All production will be accomplished in the form of cuttings.

This alternative release procedure is justified because existing commercial sources of Laurel Willow are inadequate. Propagation material of this species is needed for ecosystem protection through enhancement and construction of windbreaks and for beautification in urban and rural landscaping situations. The potential for immediate use is high, and there is commercial potential beyond specific conservation uses. No commercial cultivars of Laurel Willow have been previously released.

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| <b>Species:</b>          | <i>Salix pentandra</i> |
| <b>Common Name:</b>      | <b>Laurel Willow</b>   |
| <b>Plant Symbol:</b>     | <b>SAPE</b>            |
| <b>Accession Number:</b> | <b>9005049</b>         |

**Source:** The Aberdeen Plant Materials Center received the original plant material from the Plant Materials Center in Rose Lake, Michigan. It was collected in the upper Midwest from naturalized stands.

**Native Site Information:** This species is native to central and western Europe where it has been cultivated for many centuries. Another common name is Bay Willow. Both common names refer to the similarity of the leaf to that of the Bay Laurel tree.

**Method of Selection:** Selected from a collection of potential windbreak plants assembled and evaluated at the Aberdeen Plant Materials Center from 1981 through 1996. Laurel willow, 9005049, has been tested at Off-Center locations near Mountain Home, ID, and Winnemucca, NV. After 4 years of establishment at Mountain Home, it had 95 percent survival as compared to an average of 87 percent survival of 15 "medium to tall tree" accessions. Vigor and uniformity were rated above average. At the Winnemucca location, it ranked in the top 7 surviving accessions after 2 growing seasons. There were no other accessions of *Salix pentandra* in the collection. This accession was selected for its beauty, hardiness, appropriate growth form for windbreaks, and natural range of adaptability. This accession shows great promise for use throughout the Intermountain West when used in irrigated windbreaks and landscaping.

**Description:** Introduced from Europe during the past three centuries, Laurel willow has lustrous dark green foliage and golden yellow catkins in the spring. The dark green, shiny leaves are 2-5 inches long and very attractive. The bark on the fine twigs and the stems are green to yellow green and gray on the older trunks. The male catkins are golden yellow and quite showy. It generally requires deep moist soils or supplemental irrigation. It is a small to medium tree with a

dense round top, symmetrical crown and multiple trunks. Laurel willow grows to heights of 20-40 feet (6-12 meters) with average canopy coverage of 15-25 feet (4-8 meters).

**Insect and Disease Problems:** No problems were observed with insects or diseases which affected the survival or appearance of this plant.

**Anticipated Use:** The potential uses of Laurel Willow are wind erosion control, diversity and beautification. Its fibrous root system and wide canopy cover make it an excellent plant for soil stabilization. The moderately dense stem and leaf pattern make this an excellent plant for windbreaks. It is recommended for use in interior rows of multiple-row windbreaks, for landscaping, and to provide nesting and roosting habitat for birds. It can be used in a single row or twin-row windbreak where an evergreen is not needed or desired.

**Environmental Considerations:** Laurel willow is not intended for use in natural wetlands or riparian areas. Since it is an introduced plant from Europe, it is not an appropriate component in native communities. In riparian areas, stems cut by beavers and broken stems may spread this plant to areas beyond the landowner's control. The material being released is all one gender. The release of the 'Aberdeen Selection of Laurel Willow' is the result of a data gathering process and is thus exempt from 7 CFR 650.6.

**Potential Area of Adaptation:** The range of adaptation is very broad because the plant is expected to be used under managed conditions where annual rainfall is high or where water is made available. It is tolerant of very cold weather and adapted for use in windbreaks and landscaping in all of the Intermountain West. We expect it will also perform well in the northern Great Plains and upper Midwest.

**Potential Soil Adaptation:** Deep or moderately deep loams, sandy loams, gravelly loams, well-drained to somewhat poorly drained soils.

**Parent Plant Maintenance:** Parent plants will be maintained at the Aberdeen PMC. Cuttings from these plants will be made available to nurseries at no cost. Nurseries may establish their own parent plants for long-term cutting production.

**Submitted by:** This "Notice of Release of a Selection of Laurel Willow," was prepared by Gary Young, Agronomist; Chris Hoag, Wetland Plant Ecologist; Loren St John, Range Conservationist; USDA-NRCS, Aberdeen Plant Materials Center; and Dan Ogle, Plant Materials Specialist; USDA-NRCS, Boise, Idaho, for joint release by the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.

**Aberdeen Selection of Laurel Willow (*Salix pentandra*) for the Intermountain Region.**

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State Conservationist  
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Boise, Idaho

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Date

DR. RICHARD C. HEIMSCH  
Director  
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Date

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GARY R. NORSTROM  
Director  
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Date

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