UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

and

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

and

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

# NOTICE OF RELEASE OF 'CASA' QUAILBUSH

The United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service; the California Agricultural Experiment Station; and the California Department of Fish and Game announce the release of 'Casa' quailbush, Atriplex lentiformis (Torr.) Wats. 'Casa' was developed at the SCS Plant Materials Center, Lockeford, California.

'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. It can be grown on slightly acid to strongly alkaline soils (pH 6-8.5) and survive on annual precipitation of 20-25 cm (8-10 inches) when irrigated for initial establishment. 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 2.7-4m. (9-12 feet) high and 3-3.7m. (10-12 feet) wide. Leaves alternate, gray-green, scurfy, triangular to oblong, truncate to wedge-shaped at base, 1.26 to 5 cm. (1/2-2 in.) long, 1 to 2.5 cm. (1/2-1 in) wide, 1-veined from the base, sessile or short-petioled. Both staminate and pistillate flowers are borne in terminal panicles, usually on separate plants. The flowering period is June through August. Fruiting bracts are almost flat, 3-6 mm wide, united near the base or the middle.

## Source

On November 3, 1964, seed was collected from plants along Highway 25, 1/2 mile south of Paicines, San Benito County. Elevation 200 m (600 feet). This accession was assigned as PL-595-64.

## Development of Plant

Seed from original plants was increased in 1966 from plants grown at the Pleasanton Plant Materials Center, Alameda County. Gallon-can plants were propagated from seed and these plants were used in the secondary stages of testing at the Graylodge and Sunol Field Evaluation Plantings. It was subsequently brought to Lockeford and tested at about 30 other field sites. It has performed well at elevations up to 610 m. (2000 feet) and at annual precipitation ranging from 30 to 100 cm. (12-40 inches).

This strain has shown equal to superior performance to all accessions tested to date in establishment, vigor, growth rate, upland game use and erosion control.

Seed and Plant Production

This quailbush strain is an excellent seed producer, with seed maturing from October through December. Mature seed does tend to shatter, so periodic hand harvesting provides optimum production. There are about 1,087,000 seeds per kilogram (500,000/lb). Seed is cleaned with a clipper-type cleaner using a No. 10 top screen and a 1/18 bottom screen. Seed germination is from 60 to 85%. Plants are propagated by direct seeding into containers in the greenhouse.

Seed Source

The Lockeford Plant Materials Center will be responsible for maintaining a supply of breeder seed. Limited numbers of live plants and seed will be available for establishing seed source nurseries for initial commercial production of plants during the 1979-80 season. Commercially available plants are expected for the 1980 season.

Thomas M. Shiflet — 10/4/79

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