

Salix viminalis × *S. miyabeana* ‘Owasco’



The State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) presents ‘Owasco’ shrub willow from their willow breeding program. ‘Owasco’ is a high-yielding shrub willow that is disease resistant, produces multiple small stems, and is well suited for biomass plantings, privacy hedges, living snowfences, and ornamental plantings.



Photo by Kimberly Cameron

Salix viminalis × *S. miyabeana* 'Owasco'



Botanical Name: *Salix viminalis* × *S. miyabeana* 'Owasco'

(Family: Salicaceae)

U.S. Plant Patent 17,845

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Hardiness: U.S.D.A. Zones 4 - 6

Development: 'Owasco' was produced through controlled willow breeding in 1999 as part of a research project to produce new willow cultivars that generate high biomass yields on a variety of sites, display resistance to diseases and pests, and possess agronomic traits suitable for mechanical planting, harvesting, and post-harvest processing. 'Owasco' was produced by crossing *Salix viminalis* 'SV7' with *S. miyabeana* 'SX64'.

Significance: 'Owasco' is a shrub willow cultivar displaying exceptionally rapid growth, producing greater than 75% more woody biomass than production variety 'SX67' in a selection trial, with low incidence of rust disease or damage by beetle or sawfly. Woody stems can be harvested every three to four years, and new shoots will re-sprout the following season. Repeated harvesting of shrub willow plantations can be sustained for at least 15 years.

Description:

Height and Width: 15-20 feet tall, 3-5 foot crown spread at 3 years when grown at 2 x 3 foot spacing.

Habit: Fast-growing, upright, deciduous shrub with multiple small-diameter, vertical stems.

Foliage: Green oblong alternate leaves, typically 2.5-3.5 inches long, 0.5-1 inches wide, with foliage April through October in Zone 5.

Bark: Grey-orange when young, turning yellow-green with age; red-orange buds in winter.

Flowers: Female, early spring.

Seeds: Not known to be pollinated under field conditions.

Culture: Adaptable to a wide range of soil and moisture conditions. Prefers maximum sunlight.

Propagation: Roots easily from dormant stem cuttings.

Uses: Excellent for bioenergy plantations, privacy hedges, snowfences, and ornamental plantings.

Distribution: Available from Double A Willow (www.doubleawillow.com) beginning Spring 2007.

For information on the SUNY-ESF Willow Biomass Program go to www.esf.edu/willow.

Fact sheet prepared by Kimberly Cameron, Lawrence Smart, Timothy Volk, and Lawrence Abrahamson.

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