

Availability to Commercial Producers

Nursery owners may obtain propagated material from the Big Flats Plant Materials Center, Corning, New York to start their seed production block for commercial production.



For More Information

Visit our Plant Materials Internet site at <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> to find more information on solving conservation problems using plants.

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Big Flats Plant Materials Center
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'Keystone' buttonbush



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An improved
conservation
plant developed by
the Big Flats Plant
Materials Center,
Corning, NY



'Keystone' Buttonbush

'Keystone' buttonbush, (*Cephalanthus occidentalis* L.) (PI-594368) was released by the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Pennsylvania Game Commission. 'Keystone' can be used in wetland restoration, created wetlands, wildlife food and cover and riparian area plantings, especially in areas with fluctuating water levels. It can tolerate periodic flooding. 'Keystone' is an obligate wetland plant, but will live if planted on some upland sites. This plant has exceptional wildlife benefits, particularly for wetland birds. 'Keystone' was selected from a Northeast native plant collection for its superior plant vigor and form, and has no serious pest problems.



Description

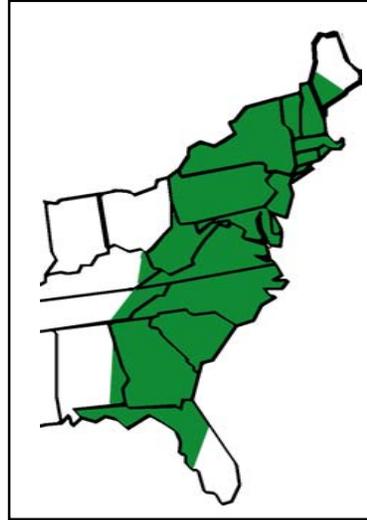
'Keystone' is a native, deciduous, erect multi-stemmed wetland shrub, obtaining heights from 8-12' and widths from 5-8'. 'Keystone' spreads by seed dispersal. It has dark green leaves that are glossy and attractive, and white flowers occurring in clusters of round heads, appearing in July. The fruit is a round dry ball or button about one inch in diameter that contains many pods. There are 134,000 seeds per pound.

Adaptation

The national range for buttonbush is from Florida to Mexico, north to Nova Scotia and Ontario. 'Keystone' has been successfully

planted from Maryland to Maine. As an obligate wetland plant, it will grow in wetter soils of swamps and bogs, and along borders of ponds and streams with full sunlight. It will tolerate water depths up to three feet. 'Keystone' has a delayed leaf emergence until warmer temperatures arrive. Flowering is poor in shade or dry soils.

Area of Adaptation for 'Keystone'



Propagation

Collections of seed can be made as soon as the fruiting heads turn reddish brown in October. A light pressure on the heads will break them into the separate fruits. Buttonbush seeds will germinate easily without any pre-treatment or stratification. Seedlings should emerge in about two weeks. Propagation can be achieved in the nursery with hardwood cuttings if rooting hormones are applied (40-96% success). It is intended for nurseries to propagate 'Keystone' from seed and sell 1-0 or 2-0 stock for field plantings.

Establishment

One year old or older seedlings or rooted cuttings can be established at a two foot spacing for erosion control, or wider for



wetland mitigation or habitual development. Controlling weed competition during the first growing season is the biggest establishment challenge. Seedlings and rooted cuttings should be properly handled prior to planting, and once planted, the soil should be tamped firmly around the plant to eliminate air pockets. No fertilizer or lime should be applied at planting. Spring water levels may delay planting until they have declined, but early plantings are preferred.

For assistance in planning your plantings and locating sources of 'Keystone', contact your NRCS or your local Soil and Water Conservation District office.

