



Your support is urgently needed to reduce the sales of invasive plants in Canada

Subject line: Support Urgently Needed to Curb the Spread of Invasive Plants

We Have a Common Goal

[Look at the mission/mandate of the organization or the role of the individual you are contacting. What are common goals or beliefs. How does support for our initiative advance their cause or purpose? Does the organization benefit from a healthy environment, lowering the costs of invasive plant management, improved recreational opportunities, reduced crop loss, . . . Tailor your approach and try to make a meaningful connection.]

We are asking for your organization to endorse our initiative to reduce the sales of invasive plants sold in Canada. We are not asking for money, only for your support for our objectives, so that we can go to policymakers and demonstrate we have the backing of Canadians.

Our Goal and Objectives

To protect our environment, economy, and public health from invasive plant species, the Canadian Coalition for Invasive Plant Regulation (CCIPR) believes Canada should improve policies, tools, and regulations by taking the following measures:

- Create a science-based national plant **risk assessment database**.
- Require that all imports of plants new to Canada undergo risk assessments.
- **Ban the sale** and movement of **high-risk** invasive plant species.
- Require **point of sale labelling** to educate the public about invasive plants and provide instructions to prevent their spread.
- Provide continued and stable funding for **public education**.
- Encourage the adoption of the National Voluntary **Code of Conduct** for the Ornamental Horticultural Industry as a short-term corrective measure.

Canada has Pledged to Reduce Invasive Species by 50% by 2030

The sale of ornamental nursery stock is **the primary pathway** for invasive plant introductions into Canada. When people go to garden centers, they are largely unaware that some of the plants being sold are invasive. They do not know the harmful ecological and socio-economic impacts invasive plants can have. **We can fix this.**

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Ornamental Invasive Plants do Harm

Here are just a few examples of invasive garden plants sold in Canada today. *[There are many more possibilities. Choose three to include or add your own examples. Choose high-risk invasive plants currently offered for sale, especially those known to dominate natural areas near you.]*

- Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) is a vector for pests like spotted lantern fly that damages crops; produces copious pollen, aggravating allergies; and damages ecosystems.
- Japanese barberry (*Berberis japonicum*) can host a rust disease that threatens food security; can increase the prevalence of ticks that carry Lyme disease; and alters ecosystems.
- Carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*), Parrot feather watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*), floating fern (*Salvinia* species) are a few examples of invasive water plants that produce dense mats displacing native aquatic plants. These can impede recreational activities and navigation; can provide habitat for mosquitoes; and cost thousands to remove from lakes and waterways.
- English ivy (*Hedera helix*) threatens all vegetation levels of forested and open areas; smothers trees; and can be a reservoir for bacterial leaf scorch (*Xylella fastidiosa*) a harmful plant pathogen.
- Yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) displaces native vegetation, alters river areas, clogs drainage pipes, and flood control ditches.
- Invasive honeysuckles (*Lonicera maackii*, *L. morrowii*, *L. tatarica*, *L. xylosteum*, *L. x bella*) threaten Species at Risk in Canada; produce toxic chemicals affecting soils; can draw pollinators away from native plants; and can cause increase in mosquito populations that are vectors for West Nile.
- Yellow groove bamboo (*Phyllostachys aureosulcata*) can damage infrastructure and reduce property values.
- Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) can form dense thickets that threaten habitats, ecosystems and Species at Risk; and can increase tick populations.
- Salt cedar (*Tamarix* spp.) can lower water tables; can create large deposits of salt in the soil; and threaten water quality and availability.

We Can No Longer Afford to Ignore the Consequences

The costs of invasive plants are massive and underreported. Canada has spent at least \$15 billion on invasive plant management over the last 60 years, with agricultural losses and control costs making up the bulk of **reported** expenditures. Environmental damages have not

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been factored into this huge and growing figure.

The number of invasive plants species in Canada rose 15 per cent over the last decade. If we do not change our regulatory process and policies, the harms to biodiversity, to our economy, and to our natural and cultural heritage, and to public health will increase as will the **financial burden** for control and mitigation.

A Growing Opportunity

National legislation and policies are urgently required to ensure that Canadians are equitably protected and there is a level playing field across the horticultural trades. While restrictions on invasive plants may be disruptive in the short term, there are opportunities for innovation – including potential for expanding local markets.

Innovative nursery growers can capitalize on regional botanical uniqueness. Importers and breeders should focus on non-invasive plants that support our native pollinators, wildlife and or food production. This process can be transformative for the industry and ultimately benefit all Canadians and global biodiversity.

Can We Add Your Voice?

Change is needed now to reduce the escalating costs of management and to protect Canada's unique and precious biodiversity. By protecting our natural heritage from degradation, present and future generations can continue to enjoy the economic, social, and cultural opportunities a healthy environment provides.

Please let us know if we can add your name to our growing list of supporters. Better still, partner with us by spreading the word through letters, email, and social media.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Your name - TEAM CCIPR

For further information, please contact: info@ccipr.ca

About CCIPR: The Canadian Coalition for Invasive Plant Regulation (CCIPR) was formed in early 2022 in response to an outcry from the public, voiced on the 36,000+ member Master Gardeners of Ontario (MGOI) Facebook group. Members of the MGOI group frequently inquire about getting rid of invasive plants in their own yards, but also why those same invasive plants are still being sold at their local nurseries and retailers. CCIPR (pronounced “sipper”) is calling for the regulation of invasive ornamental plants in the horticultural, pet, and aquarium trade to protect Canada's biodiversity. Visit ccipr.ca for more information and to

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download our whitepaper. It details the current risks and offers insight into what we can do to change Canada's current path. Find us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).