



AgBrief

Maryland's Invasive Plant Regulations

May 2016

Plants from other parts of the world can be welcomed, manageable additions to gardens; however, some invasive species cause serious ecological damage. In the worst cases, invasive plants choke out other plant life, putting extreme pressure on native plants and animals. Ultimately, invasive plants alter habitats and reduce biodiversity. Many of these problem plants are imported, bred, distributed and promoted for sale in the landscape and nursery industries – the second largest agricultural sector in Maryland (behind poultry production).

Maryland's Invasive Plant Advisory Committee, established by the General Assembly in 2011, advises the Agriculture Secretary on issues related to regulating the sale of invasive plants, and preventing them from entering or spreading further in Maryland. The committee was charged with using a scientific weed risk assessment protocol to classify invasive plants as Tier 1 or Tier 2 and recommend regulations to reduce the risk of invasive plants in Maryland.

Maryland's Invasive Plant Regulations that list invasive plants went into effect April 11, 2016, though enforcement for various provisions will be phased in over the next year. This AgBrief is a summary of those regulations.

Tier 1 Plants

Tier 1 plants are deemed to be so invasive, a person may not acquire one in Maryland after April 11, 2016.

A person may not propagate, import, transfer, sell, purchase, transport, or introduce any living part of a Tier 1 invasive plant in the state after **April 12, 2017**.

There are some minor exceptions – such as using the plant for research, conducting an activity that controls or disposes of the plant, or exporting it out of state. All exceptions, however, must be approved by the Secretary. Below is a list of Tier 1 plants, to date.

- *Ficaria verna* (fig buttercup)
- *Geranium lucidum* (shining cranesbill)
- *Iris pseudacorus* (yellow flag iris)

More plants may be added by regulation to Tier 1 in the future.



Tier 2 Plants

Tier 2 plants are also invasive but may be bought and sold if the retail outlet posts a sign identifying the plants as such.

The sign (shown above) is mandated by the Maryland Department of Agriculture and can be downloaded and printed at: www.mda.maryland.gov/invasiveplants.

Landscaping services also may not plant or supply Tier 2 invasive plants to customers unless they provide their customers a list of Tier 2 invasive plants.

The following plants are designated as Tier 2 invasive Plants in Maryland and subject to the above restrictions as of **July 12, 2016**.

- *Euonymus alatus* (burning bush)
- *Ligustrum obtusifolium* (blunt-leaved or border privet)
- *Wisteria sinensis* (Chinese wisteria)
- *Wisteria floribunda* (Japanese wisteria)
- *Wisteria x formosa* (floribunda x sinensis hybrids)

More plants may be added by regulation to Tier 2 in the future.

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For more information, see:

www.mda.maryland.gov/invasiveplants



The weed risk assessments that were completed for each plant currently regulated in a tier are available on the department's website at www.mda.maryland.gov/invasiveplants. These are comprehensive and important reference documents.

Going forward

Invasive plants are being evaluated on an on-going basis for inclusion in one of the tiers.

For a list of plant currently under consideration see: www.mda.maryland.gov/invasiveplants.



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