



March 23, 2004

FOR: Connecticut Invasive Plants Council
FROM: Bob Heffernan, Executive Director
RE: Economic Impact Of Banning Plants on the Invasive Plant List

We have consulted with growers of a few plants on the Council's Invasive Plant list, and believe the following is a reliable estimate of the value of wholesale and retail sales. The wholesale column is an estimate of what growers have sold in the year 2003, some of which is exported to other states. The retail column is an estimate of what retail nurseries, garden centers, and landscapers sold last year (a majority of these plants were bought from in-state nurseries, but there are also sizeable purchases from out-of-state nurseries).

The issue of whether the banning of an invasive plant mandates also the banning of that plant's *cut flower* needs to be considered by the Council. Star of Bethlehem is used considerably as a cut flower by the state's florists on a year-round basis, and intensively during the Christmas season. Growing of this cut flower is done almost entirely in South America (Colombia), Holland, and California, and then shipped into the state.

As you can see, **there would be a total \$18,781,000 sales impact** (combination of wholesale sales and retail sales) to the state's Green Industry if these plant species were banned outright. In my past testimony to the General Assembly's Environment Committee, I had estimated generally the economic value of some plants considered "invasive" to be in the range of \$15-20 million per year. There may also be significant sales of other plants on the list, such as *Lonicera*, that are not included in this estimate. Please note that we believe these estimates are on the LOW side and actual figures are probably higher. They also do not include market-ready inventories of these plants that may be carried from year to year, or the inventory of plants in the ground or in containers that are not yet ready for market and may take years to reach that position.

In addition, the Council must remember that Connecticut's 6% state sales tax would probably be

applied to the \$12.4 million sales of the retail column, translating also into the loss of nearly three quarters of a million dollars in tax revenue to the state if these plants were banned.

<u>PLANT</u>	<u>WHOLESALE</u>	<u>RETAIL</u>
Acer platinoides (mostly “red maples” such as Crimson King)	\$450,000	\$900,000
Berberis thunbergii (mostly red barberries, such as Crimson Pygmy and Rosy Glow)	\$2,450,000	\$4,900,000
Euonymus alatus (entirely the “Compacta” variety)	\$2,245,000	\$4,490,000
Miscanthus sinensis (several hybrids)	\$842,000	\$1,684,000
Rosa rugosa	\$190,000	\$380,000
Eichhornia crassipes (water hyacinth)	\$40,000	\$80,000
Ornithogalum umbellatum (Star of Bethlehem, used as a cut flower by florists)	\$30,000	\$100,000
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>\$6,247,000</u>	<u>\$12,534,000</u>



April 16, 2004

FOR: Connecticut Invasive Plants Council
 FROM: Bob Heffernan, Executive Director
 RE: Economic Impact Of Banning Plants on the Invasive Plant List

At the Council's direction, we have asked our industry for sale figures of the eight additional plants with potential economic value raised at the Council's last meeting:

<u>PLANT</u>	<u>WHOLESALE</u>	<u>RETAIL</u>
Acer ginnala (Amur maple)	\$280,000	\$560,000
Robinia pseudoacacia (Black locust)	\$24,000	\$48,000
Frangula alnus (Glossy Buckthorn)	\$5,000	\$10,000
Ligustrum ovalifolium Hassk. (California privet)	\$42,000	\$84,000
Ligustrum vulgare L. (European privet)	\$4,000	\$8,000
Ampelopsis brevipedunculata (Porcelainberry)	\$3,000	\$6,000
Lysimachia nummularia (Moneywort)	\$3,800	\$7,600
Phalaris australis (Reed canary grass)	The CT Farm Bureau estimates there are over 100,000 acres of reed canary grass planted across the state.	
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>\$361,800</u>	<u>\$723,600</u>