



Office of the Secretary
Washington, DC 20250

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Washington, DC 20250

INVASIVE PLANT PEST AND DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH
APRIL 2024

By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS the human-assisted introduction and spread of invasive plant pests and diseases pose a great risk to our Nation's natural resources and food crops, threaten American livelihoods and our way of life; and

WHEREAS by raising awareness of these economically and environmentally devastating plant pests and diseases, individuals can take simple steps to avoid accidentally spreading them to new places; and

WHEREAS spring marks the emergence of invasive pests that hide in firewood or attach to outdoor items; hitchhike on cars, trucks, boats, and campers; or spread on homegrown fruit, vegetables, and plants sent through the mail, carried on a flight, or given as gifts; and

WHEREAS climate change has increased the prevalence of plant pest infestations and disease, allowed pests to produce more generations each year, extended their suitable habitat, and increased the risk to plants; and

WHEREAS this is an opportunity for the public to join forces with the plant health protection community, including Federal and State agencies, local governments, Tribal Nations, businesses, industry, environmental groups, schools, and community organizations to reduce the spread of invasive pests;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Secretary of Agriculture Thomas J. Vilsack, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2024 as Invasive Plant Pest and Disease Awareness Month. I encourage U.S. residents to learn more about how plants contribute to our daily lives and how invasive insects and plant diseases impact the plants on which we depend, as well as our environment and the economy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 1st day of April 2024, the two-hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

THOMAS J. VILSACK
Secretary