INVASIVE PLANT PEST AND DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH

APRIL 2023

By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS the introduction and spread of invasive plant pests and diseases continue to harm our Nation’s natural resources and food crops, and threaten American livelihoods and our way of life; and

WHEREAS by increasing the awareness of these economically and environmentally destructive plant pests and diseases, especially those known as “Hungry Pests,” individuals can take simple steps to avoid inadvertently spreading them; and

WHEREAS spring marks the emergence of invasive pests that can hide in firewood or attach themselves 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 level of plant pest infestations and disease infection, 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 global plant health safeguarding community, 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 2023 as Invasive Plant Pest and Disease Awareness Month. I encourage all U.S. residents to learn more about how plants contribute to our daily lives and how invasive plant pests and diseases can have devastating effects on the environment and our economy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 3rd day of April 2023, the two-hundred forty-seventh year of the Independence of the United States of America.

THOMAS J. VILSACK
Secretary